



Jordan Times

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Indian police detain 200 Sikh politicians

CHANDIGARH India (R) — Indian police have arrested more than 200 Sikh politicians ahead of a rally planned for Tuesday to protest against alleged excesses by security forces, police said on Monday. Police in Punjab, battling a decade-old militant campaign to make the state a separate Sikh homeland to be called Khalistan, said the police had arrested more than 200 Sikh politicians who were expected to lead the 4,200 people which police have reported killed so far this year in Punjab's separatist violence have been unarmed youths, killed by security forces on suspicion of separatist sympathies. The Indian government has acknowledged that some excesses may have occurred in its battles against separatists but rejects most such charges as militant propaganda. Punjab's newspapers carried rival advertisements on Monday from Sikh organisations, saying they would hold the rally outside the law courts of the industrial city Ludhiana, and from the state, insisting on a venue outside the city. Punjab's administration said it must be held outside Ludhiana to avoid traffic jams and because "anti-social elements could sneak in and cause trouble."

King Hassan leaves for U.S.

RABAT (R) — King Hassan of Morocco, one of Washington's closest Arab allies, left Rabat for New York on Monday hoping to reap the rewards for his support of U.S. policy in the Middle East. Government leaders say they hope for more economic and military aid and help in tackling a foreign debt estimated by the World Bank at \$20 billion in 1988 and now thought to be about \$22 billion. U.S. diplomats said Washington's efforts to arrange Middle East peace talks were high on the agenda for the monarch, whose country was the first to recognise American independence over 200 years ago. King Hassan sent 1,200 soldiers to Saudi Arabia a week after Iraq invaded Kuwait last year. Though they were not involved in combat, they demonstrated Moroccan support for the U.S.-led alliance. The King will make a state visit to Washington on Thursday and Friday after talks in New York with U.N. delegation leaders. He is due to meet President George Bush on Thursday. The King, making his fifth visit to the United States, will also see U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady and International Monetary Fund chief Michel Camdessus.

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PNC opens crucial session Arafat supports U.S. efforts, rejects 'Israeli blackmail'

ALGIERS, Algeria (Agencies) — PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, opening a crucial session of the Palestinians' parliament-in-exile, offered support for U.S. proposed Middle East peace talks but demanded concessions by Israel. "Let everyone know that we reject Israeli blackmail and Israeli conditions," he declared. Mr. Arafat urged the leaders of the United States and Soviet Union to do everything possible to resolve the Middle East crisis and said his people "have chosen the path of peace."

Palestinians from East Jerusalem from contact with the PLO, which it considers a terrorist organisation. Israel said Monday the two Palestinians, Faisal Hussein and Hanan Ashrawi, would be prosecuted if they attended. The congress was the first since 1988, when the body recognised the existence of Israel. The delegates will debate the proposed peace talks, tentatively set for October, and seek common ground among the divided

Palestinians. On the eve of the congress, headline leader George Habash, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), categorically rejected the peace talks, saying U.S. terms were unacceptable. In Damascus, a loose coalition of anti-Arafat factions also urged the PNC to reject American proposals for the peace conference. The Palestine National Salvation Front "warns those meeting

in Algiers against accepting them," said a statement by the front read by Khaled Fakhour, former chairman of the PNC. He said the American proposals "do not meet the minimum limit of Palestinian national rights, including full and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all Palestinian and Arab land, notably Jerusalem." Mr. Arafat called on presidents George Bush and Mikhail S. Gorbachev to "do all within your power to resolve the Middle East

problem and, particularly, the Palestinian problem, in conformity to international law." "For our part," he said, "We have chosen the path of peace since 1988." He said the international community should "avoid falling, once more, into the error of oppressing the Palestinian people... deprived of its international rights, human rights, and expelled from its land."

Bush calls on U.N. to repeal Zionism is racism resolution

UNITED NATIONS — President George Bush called Monday for the repeal of a 1975 United Nations resolution that equates Zionism with racism, saying it is time to address old feuds that bedevil world peace. In remarks before the U.N. General Assembly, Mr. Bush also said Iraq was contemptuous of U.N. resolutions that require the Iraqi regime to cooperate with U.N. inspection teams looking for weapons of mass destruction. "His (President Saddam Hussein) contempt continues even as I am speaking," Mr. Bush said.

As for Iraq, Mr. Bush said United Nations sanctions must remain in place as long as President Hussein is in power. "We cannot compromise for a moment in seeing that Iraq destroys all its weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, and we shall not compromise." Mr. Bush spoke as U.N. officials disclosed that Iraq had detained a team of U.N. nuclear inspectors in Baghdad who had found documents apparently proving that Iraq was developing nuclear weapons. Mr. Bush's speech came several days after he served notice that he was willing to send U.S. forces back to the Gulf to back up U.N. inspection efforts. Mr. Bush also called for the release of the Western hostages held in Lebanon, saying, "let's

put the law above the crude and cowardly practice of hostage holding." Mr. Bush opened his speech noting the chance for peace and prosperity in a world "leavened by the cold war's end." He called on all nations to work to resolve border disputes peacefully, noting that as communism has fallen, old ethnic hatreds have sprung to life. He also extolled the virtues of free market economies in the world. He said the United States had no desire to impose a "Pax Americana" on the world. At the same time, he said, "we will not retreat and pull back into isolation... We will offer friendship and leadership." In his address, Mr. Bush said

Arafat seeks PNC backing

From Lamis K. Andoni in Algiers

BY pledging commitment for a peaceful solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict while rejecting what he termed as Israeli preconditions, Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat is trying to kill two birds with one stone. Throwing the ball back into the Israeli court by refusing attention on United Nations Security Council resolutions and seeking the backing of the Palestine National Council (PNC) for flexible resolutions that will allow Palestinian participation in the proposed peace conference.

that is consistent with United Nations resolutions.

According to PLO officials and Palestinian analysts the organisation is seeking to divert the pressure that it has been subjected to for the last months, onto Israel by emphasising the Security Council resolutions that call for Israeli withdrawal and recognition of Palestinian national rights as the basis for peace talks between the Arabs and Israel. "It is an attempt to re-emphasise substantive issues instead of modalities," explained one PLO official.

But none so far has declared any intention of withdrawing from the PNC or breaking away from the PLO. The most that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), led by George Habash, and the Nayef Hawatmeh wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) will do if the PNC authorised Palestinian participation is to pull out from the PLO Executive Committee and confine themselves to the role of a loyal opposition within the PNC.

It was not clear whether the outcome of the debate would be made public at the end of the congress.

The meeting comes as the PLO finds itself at one of its weakest moments. Mr. Arafat's decision to side with Iraq during the Gulf war led to strains between the PLO and some Arab states. Mr. Arafat is under heavy pressure by major PLO factions to insist on the PLO's direct participation in peace talks. They see a peace conference without PLO representations as a sellout to Israel.

Jordan, Yemen explore economic integration

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein voiced full support for the on-going economic integration process between Yemen and Jordan and called for further efforts to bolster the brotherly ties between the two countries. The King, speaking at a meeting held at Al Nadwa Palace and attended by the prime ministers of Jordan and Yemen; reviewed the general political situation in the Middle East and the on-going efforts to achieve peace in the region.



Yemen's Prime Minister Haider Abu Bakr Al Attas conveyed to the King a message from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Taher Masri, the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh, and the King's Military Secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammed. The two prime ministers briefed the King on the progress of work undertaken by the Higher Joint Jordanian Yemeni Committee which opened a meeting in Amman Monday to discuss integration between the two countries, especially in trade and economic fields. King Hussein later hosted a luncheon for members of the two sides. Earlier Monday, the two prime

Prince Hassan proposes Helsinki-type conference for the Middle East

GOTEMBA — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said here Monday that a breakthrough in resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict can pave the way for a conference for security and cooperation in the Middle East. "We look at this as a process rather than a one time event, a process that can draw on the moral weight of the Helsinki process in Europe," said the Crown Prince in an address to the meeting of the Arab-Japanese dialogue which opened at Gotemba-Japan Monday. In his address, delivered on his behalf by Minister of Planning Ziyad Fariz, the Crown Prince said that such process "can be evolved to help identify priorities through a three-pronged strategy based on energy policy, arms control and debt reduction."

Following are major excerpts of Prince Hassan's address: It is no exaggeration to say that oil revenues in the Middle East have literally fuelled the arms race, which in turn has been largely behind the external debt crisis faced by many countries in the region. Any effective consideration of arms control must therefore be necessity focus on the issues of energy and indebtedness. For example, the recent proposal from Brussels for a European Energy Charter can provide useful guidelines for tackling constructively the issue of energy in the Middle East. This proposed charter outlines three objectives for the European energy sector including eastern Europe: security of supply, safeguarding the environment and efficiency in production. In approaching the Middle East peace process, we are aware of the need to strike a delicate balance between respect for the normative contents of relevant international law norms and Security Council resolutions on the one hand, and the need for flexibility and ingenuity to ensure that negotiations are meaningful on the other. The Middle East region is understandably still recovering from the traumatic effects of the Gulf crisis. Augmented symptoms of political disorientation, economic fragility and persecution are still apparent and need yet to be remedied. My country in particular, from a humanitarian standpoint, has had to deal with all three symptoms and often at the cost of its own security, economy and demographic balance. Since the early days of the crisis, with very limited resources, Jordan has had to deal with the influx of hundreds of thousands of third country nationals fleeing Kuwait and Iraq. We have suffered heavy losses in trade and industry as a result of U.N. embargoes and continue to carry the heavy burden of trying to accommodate more than 300,000 expatriate returnees from GCC countries, a third of whom are under the age of 15. Our already strained financial and natural resources are in jeopardy. I should like to mention here,

Israeli troops kill 3 DFLP fighters

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli troops killed three Palestinian fighters who were trying to infiltrate into Israel from a U.N.-controlled buffer zone between Israel and Syria, the army said Monday. The fighters belonged to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a hardline Syrian faction of the PLO, the army said. The DFLP, headed by Nayef Hawatmeh, has called on the Palestinians to boycott proposed Middle East peace talks. The fighters were killed Sunday, a day before the Palestine National Council opened debate on whether the PLO should approve Palestinian participation in a U.S.-sponsored peace conference. An Israeli patrol spotted the three men close to the Israeli border, in the Mount Hermon region, and opened fire, the army said. The army did not say if the fighters returned fire. The fighters were armed with Soviet-made Kalashnikov rifles, hand grenades, land missiles, and a pistol with a silencer, the army said. Israel shares an 80 kilometres border with Syria, which is patrolled by U.N. peacekeepers.

Iraqis cease documents from U.N. team

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraqi authorities forcibly removed boxes of documents from a U.N. team hunting for evidence of nuclear weapons-making on Monday after detaining the team members for five hours. Team leader David Kay said the team made a snap inspection at an undeclared site in central Baghdad and found a large amount of documentation on the Iraqi nuclear programme. "This documentation was in considerable depth with regard to the programme in general as well as with regard to the production of physical nuclear material and nuclear weapons development," Mr. Kay said that as well as the documents found in the 10-storey office building, it was clear that a large number of other papers had been hastily removed and the centre was in use until quite recently. The dispute coincides with a major row between the U.N. and Baghdad over the use of helicopters by inspectors verifying the scrapping of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction under the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire. At the United Nations in New York, U.S. President George Bush told the General Assembly on Monday that Iraq was rebuilding its weapons of mass destruction and said there would be no compromise with Baghdad over inspection of its facilities. Mr. Kay said his 45-member team began its surprise inspection at 5:30 a.m. and first asked to leave the walled and guarded compound around the building about 3 p.m. It was allowed to depart around 8 p.m. only after the boxes of documents had been

forcibly seized by Iraqi officials despite strenuous and repeated protests. "The volume of the material was considerable. Over three car loads was involved," Mr. Kay added. In Vienna, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said the U.N. inspectors found two types of documents, some of which related to a secret Iraqi nuclear weapons development project. "The first related broadly to the Iraqi nuclear programme in all of its aspects," an IAEA statement said. "The second type of documentation specifically related to fissile material production and Iraq's hitherto undiscovered nuclear weapons development."

The dispute over the documents is the latest in a series of disagreements between the U.N. and Baghdad, which must declare and destroy all its weapons of mass destruction under the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire. The office building stands in the same grounds as the Iraqi capital's main conference centre, which was destroyed by bombing during the war. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker called the reports that Iraq had detained United Nations inspectors "extraordinarily regrettable" and said Baghdad had already learned this year the consequences of defying the U.N. Mr. Baker was asked about the reports before a meeting with Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister Nathan Shamuyirira. He said: "I think it's extraordinarily regrettable. The Security Council resolutions that call for inspections are unconditional and unqualified and the whole purpose of these resolutions is to determine the extent and degree to which Iraq is trying to continue to maintain capabilities with respect to weapons of mass destruction."

European deputies urge Palestinians to attend conference

By Nidal M. Ibrahim Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — The chairman of a European Parliament delegation visiting the Middle East Monday urged Palestinians to attend the proposed October peace conference. Professor Dimitrios Niamias, who is heading the six-member delegation on a tour of the region, also stressed the important role Jordan could play in helping overcome obstacles in convening the conference. Prof. Niamias said the Palestine National Council (PNC) should vote to attend the peace conference to take advantage of "this greatest possible opportunity to have the problem solved." "People interested in solving the problem should go to negotiations, they should sit, they should listen, they should hear and then act accordingly," Prof. Niamias said. The PNC is currently meeting in Algiers to decide whether to attend the proposed U.S. sponsored peace conference. Syria, Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon have

Yugoslav ceasefire holds

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia (R) — Yugoslavia's truce held on Monday despite sporadic violations on all fronts in breakaway Croatia and calm began returning to the Balkan country after weeks of fighting. With optimism growing among diplomats and officials in Yugoslavia, a European Community-sponsored peace conference on Yugoslavia announced that it would reconvene for a plenary session in the Hague on Thursday. The conference, headed by former British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington, collapsed last week when an EC-brokered peace accord failed to take hold. In the Croatian capital Zagreb, officials said Yugoslav President Stipe Mesic, a Croat, would travel to the United Nations in

New York on Tuesday to urge it to send a peacekeeping force to Yugoslavia. The U.N. Security Council is expected to discuss the possibility of sending a force later this week. More than 500 people have been killed in almost three months of fighting since Serbs in Croatia rebelled against the Republic's independence declaration on June 25. But Zagreb was rapidly returning to normal a day after the army agreed to a truce on Sunday and halted a massive offensive that threatened to crush the rebel republic's outgunned forces. "I think the worst is over," Croatian President Franjo Tudjman told passers-by as he strolled the streets of Zagreb on Sunday night flanked by bodyguards. Traffic jams returned to the streets and street lights were on after a four-day blackout ordered as a protection against possible air raids. The only shooting in Zagreb during the night came from jubilant Croatian fighters firing in the air to celebrate the ceasefire. "I think the ceasefire is holding despite sporadic localised violations. The higher echelons on both sides seem to want it to hold," a Western diplomat said. Another diplomat quoted a top army officer as expressing optimism that the truce would hold, although violations were occurring. Air-raid alerts were reported in at least two Croatian towns but there were no air attacks. Croatian radio said there were a string of ceasefire violations on the ground on Monday morning.

8 opposition leaders jailed in Iran

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

NICOSIA — Eight leading Iranian opposition figures have been given prison sentences ranging from six months to three years in secret trials for "siding with enemies of the state," the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported Monday.

The report, the first disclosure by Iran's official media of the trials held last month, came amid intensifying efforts by President Hashemi Rafsanjani to liberalise Iran 12 years after the 1979 Islamic revolution and to shed the regime's reputation for repression and intolerance.

Mr. Rafsanjani, leader of Iran's so-called pragmatists, has also been eager to demonstrate that since he became president two years ago the Islamic Republic's widely criticised human rights record has improved.

IRNA, monitored in Nicosia, quoted Hojatoleslam Ebrahim Raisi, the Islamic revolutionary court's Tehran prosecutor, as saying the men convicted were among 15 members of the banned Society for the Defence of Freedom arrested last year.

He did not say what happened to the other seven. But they were apparently either acquitted or released before the trials began.

They were among more than 40 people arrested in May and June last year after 90 leading liberals signed a scathing open letter from the society to Mr. Rafsanjani demanding "freedom and justice."

The letter, which caused severe embarrassment for the government, criticised Mr. Rafsanjani's economic policies because they were not helping the poor, the lack of political freedom and "incompetent foreign policies... which forced our country into political isolation."

The society was closely linked to the Freedom Movement, the only opposition group permitted to operate in Iran until it was outlawed last year after continual harassment by security agencies.

It was led by veteran politician Mehdi Bazargan, 84, who was the first prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran after it was established by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1979.

He later resigned in protest against revolutionary excesses, including the November 1979 seizure of the U.S. embassy in Tehran. He apparently escaped the government dragnet.

The signatories of the open letter to Mr. Rafsanjani included Mr. Bazargan, his former cabinet

ministers, prominent intellectuals and military officers. The authorities retaliated with the crack-down and banned the Freedom Movement.

Mr. Raisi did not say why the men were tried in secret. He claimed all had been allowed to select lawyers, but had chosen to defend themselves.

He identified the men jailed as Mr. Bazargan's son, Abdolali; Ali Ardalan, secretary-general of the Society for the Defence of Freedom; former Tehran mayor Mehdi Tavassoli; former interior minister Hashem Sabaghian; Abolfazl Shahshahani, Habib Davaran, Akbar Zarinab and Mohammad Reza Movahed.

IRNA quoted Mr. Raisi as saying that the men were convicted for signing the "insulting open letter... to the president." He said they were found guilty by a no-jury revolutionary court of "siding with internal and external enemies of the Islamic revolution, in connection with foreign radio active against the Islamic revolution, destroying and weakening the morale of the people and making them distrustful towards the Islamic Republic's system, spreading rumours against the Islamic Republic's system and active participation in spreading lies."

Mr. Raisi said they also were involved in producing and distributing a newsletter, "the main objective of which was to sow discord... and side with internal and external enemies."

He did not name any group or country. But radical newspapers last year claimed the Freedom Movement was linked with the United States and Israel.

Mr. Raisi denied reports that the men had been kept in solitary confinement before they went on trial. But he said they had been "kept away from other prisoners" for a few days immediately after their arrest.

Allied troops to leave southeast Turkey — official

ANKARA (R) — Turkey said Monday that Western troops sent to protect Iraqi Kurds would be withdrawn from southeastern Turkey.

The allies would rely on air power for the next three months to deter Iraqi forces from attacking Kurds.

"The ground troops will be withdrawn as soon as possible," foreign ministry spokesman Ferhat Ataman said.

Allied attack helicopters based at Batman in southeast Turkey

would leave as well as some 2,400 Western troops stationed at Silopi, near the Iraqi border, he added.

F-111 fighter-bombers would replace A-10 ground attack planes based at Incirlik air base, southern Turkey, but the overall number of combat planes there would remain at 48.

Mr. Ataman said Turkey had extended for 90 days the mandate of the combined task force set up to protect Kurds in northern Iraq against attack by Iraq's forces.

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Turkish troops kill suspected kidnappers

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkish security forces have killed three Kurdish rebels said to have been among the kidnappers of five Westerners released unharmed on Friday.

Security officials said three guerrillas of the outlawed Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) were killed in a clash near the town of Kariyova in the eastern province of Bingol on Sunday night.

Local reporters said the three men were part of a PKK band which abducted three Americans, a Briton and an Australian near Kariyova on August 30 and held them for three weeks.

There was no immediate official confirmation.

The five Westerners, four of whom had been looking for Noah's Ark, were expected to leave a U.S. air base at Incirlik in southern Turkey on Monday after completing medical tests.

"They are in reasonably good spirits," a Western diplomat said. "They slept out for three weeks. They were kept on the march for nine days and then kept in the same place."

The diplomat said about 15 young PKK guerrillas had guarded the captives and had not treated them violently. The PKK did not claim responsibility or make any demands before freeing the men.

More than 3,300 people have been killed since the PKK began its violent campaign for an independent Kurdish state in the mountains of southeast Turkey in 1984.

Meanwhile, a U.S. official said Monday that the five Westerners who were released are anxious to go home.

"They want to be with their families as soon as possible," said U.S. army Maj. Michael McKinney, a spokesman for the Turkish-U.S. air base at Incirlik, where the five had been flown after their release.

He said they might be flown out later Monday, but declined to comment further on travel arrangements.

The Americans and the Australian were searching for Noah's Ark in eastern Turkey, where the Bible said it landed after the deluge.

Noah's Ark Research Foundation based in Sydney, Australia, was not involved in the search,

but was taken by the kidnappers from a separate bus.

PKK spokesman said foreigners visiting eastern Turkey needed "passes" issued by rebel offices in Europe.

U.S. air force Lt. Col. Gerry Guss, another Incirlik spokesman, said the five men were still tired after their ordeal and did not want to meet journalists.

He said all were in good health except for "some minor bruises or scratches from continuously walking around in the open for three weeks."

Australian archaeologist Allen Roberts, among those released could resume his search for the ark next year, a spokesman said Monday.

Noah's Ark Research Foundation spokesman John McNicol said after speaking with Roberts' family that the 59-year-old adventurer was in good health apart from a minor ankle injury and was likely to continue the project.

"We believe that Dr. Roberts will want to go back to the Akyala site, possibly next year, to ascertain whether the boat-shaped formation is the ark," Mr. McNicol said.

He said the five men were still tired after their ordeal and did not want to meet journalists.

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Smog covers Kuwait, fears grow of effects of burning wells

By Diana Abdallah
Reuters

KUWAIT — The worst black smog in more than a month shrouded Kuwait city on Monday, where public fears are growing over the long-term effects of breathing toxic gases from hundreds of burning oil wells.

But it also cited "positive measures" being taken by Tehran to improve its human rights record and welcomed cooperation by Mr. Rafsanjani's administration at the "highest level."

Mr. Galindo said 500 people were executed in Iran between January and October last year.

The London-based Amnesty International human rights watchdog group claims some 2,000 political prisoners were executed between July 1988 and January 1989.

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Iran opens border to Soviet Turkmenia

NICOSIA (R) — Iran, stepping up contacts with Muslim Soviet republics, opened a border crossing to Turkmenia, the Iranian news agency (IRNA) reported on Monday.

The crossing at Baigiran in northeast Iran, 30 kilometres from Turkmenia's capital Ashkhabad, was inaugurated on Sunday, it said.

Turkmenia's President Saparmurad Niyazov and governor-general of Iran's Khorassan province

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The Housing Crisis

Government struggling to respond to housing shortage

This is the third in a series of articles that seek to examine the current housing crisis in Jordan. This article deals with government efforts to address the crisis and problems in helping the returnees.

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — While the housing shortage has affected not only recent returnees but long-time residents in the Kingdom, government measures to alleviate the problem have been limited by both lack of planning and lack of funds, officials say.

Current government efforts to absorb the returnees, officials acknowledge, are short-term, stop-gap measures. Long-term plans are still in the planning stages, they said.

"To build housing... is not a matter of one day," said Nidal Qaqish, project manager with the Urban Development Department (UDD). "You need studies and you need planning."

While the Jordanian government expected some returnees in the aftermath of the war, it was "nowhere (of) the magnitude of what's happening," said Mr. Qaqish, who is in charge of low cost housing

projects for the UDD. As a result, authorities did not realize the scope or the full implications of the mass exodus of expatriates from the Gulf states until early August, he said.

Taking into account recent studies indicating the returnees' weak financial position, low cost housing seems to be the best approach to addressing the country's housing crisis, Mr. Qaqish said.

The UDD, in cooperation with the Housing Corporation, is preparing a study explaining the situation in the housing sector and proposing solutions, he said. The study, after being reviewed by the government, will be presented as a request for aid to the United States, European countries, the World Bank and other possible sources of financing.

Preliminary government estimates indicate that Jordan will need approximately 32,000 housing units to accommodate the influx of returnees, said Dr. Victor Billeh, president of the National Centre for Educational Research and Development. The centre, at the request of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, has undertaken various studies to establish a demographic picture of the returnees.

Studies of returnees who left

the Gulf during or soon after the war show that 47 per cent already own houses in the Kingdom, Dr. Billeh said. But surveys being conducted by the Department of Statistics on the most recent wave of returnees indicate that many do not have housing in Jordan. According to these studies, two out of three families will require housing.

Dr. Billeh rejects the charge that the government has been slow to respond to the housing crisis.

"The fact that this (the returnees condition) is being measured and understood means that the government is doing something," he said.

"This requires funding," said Dr. Billeh, reiterating the government's weak financial position. "You can't just start a housing project anywhere. You need planning and funding."

Officials interviewed readily concede that the government alone will not be able to address the problem. An active and concerted effort by private builders, in cooperation with government planners, is needed to address the crisis, they say.

"We want to release some projects to the private sector," Mr. Qaqish said. "We want them to help."

New housing project planned

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two local construction firms Monday won contracts from the Housing Corporation to build a housing estate in an area south of Amman along with schools and public buildings.

The managers of the two companies signed the agreements with Youssef Hiyasat, the corporation's director general, who said that the housing estate will be set up on 200 dunums of land.

Under the two agreements, one of the firms will carry out infrastructure work, building roads, sewage and electricity networks, retaining walls and green areas as well as the housing units at the cost of JD 2.2 million.

The housing estate, to be known as Al Mustanada Estate, will benefit 400 people and will be carried out in three stages, with the first stage to be completed by the middle of next year and the other by the beginning of 1993, Mr. Hiyasat said.

He added that the project entails public building and schools as well as health centres, a vocational training centre for women and a community centre at a total cost of JD 900,000.

Mr. Hiyasat said that the Housing Corporation will start accepting applications for acquiring housing units in the new project before the end of the year.

The Mustanada Housing Estate in southern Amman will be the second largest estate in the country after the Abu Nuseir Housing Estate, built in the 1980s. The Abu Nuseir Estate now houses some 20,000 people.

Officials urge implementation of new conservation methods to save water

AMMAN (J.T.) — A day-long seminar Monday on water resources in the Kingdom heard calls from speakers about the dire need for additional water resources to be found to meet the growing need of the ever increasing population.

The seminar, held at the Royal Cultural Centre under the chairmanship of Her Majesty Queen Noor, was opened by Minister of Social Development Awni Al Bashir, who said that the population explosion, the destruction of forests and the damage to the ozone are responsible for the continued depletion of the water resources.

The ministry called on concerned authorities to speed up the search for alternative water resources and for rationalisation of water use in the domestic and agricultural sectors.

Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Mutazz Al Bilbeisi told the seminar organised by the business and Professional Women's Club that water consumption has been on the increase in Jordan. He cited the thousands of expatriates returning to settle here at a time when the Kingdom is struggling to find additional water resources as the reason.

Local, regional and international studies have revealed that by the 1995 the world will witness the beginning of acute shortages of water supplies for industry and agriculture, Mr. Bilbeisi said.

He added that in the absence of new water resources that can be found by completion of construction of the Waddeh Dam on the



Her Majesty Queen Noor listens to speakers Monday at a seminar at the Royal Cultural

Centre. Participants called for new measures to deal with the water problem (Petra photo)

Yarmouk River and the utilisation of the Disi Water Basin Jordan will soon be faced with severe water shortages given the level of water consumption and the population growth.

He said that the government was working on a new strategy that would include measures to reduce pollution of water resources, recycling of treated waste water for irrigation and spreading awareness among member of the public about the need to rationalise water use.

According to Dr. Mohammad Bani Hani, Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment secretary general, water consumption in Jordan last year stood at 180 million cubic metres of which only 37 million were used for industry. Dr. Bani Hani told the meeting that concerned authorities should examine the prospect of establishing a desalination plant at Aqaba to provide water for the southern regions.

Dr. Elias Salameh, from the

University of Jordan, submitted a working paper tackling the question of the Kingdom's share of international water resources. Unless a quick and satisfactory solution is reached for the water problems of the Middle East, the coming generation will witness conflicts over water sharing and water rights.

Dr. Salameh called on Arab states to embark on meaningful measures to ensure sufficient water resources for the coming century.

Industrial sector strives to overcome problems in developing and marketing products

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's national industry is facing two types of difficulties which are obstructing its progress and marketing of products abroad, according to Mohammad Asfour, president of the federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce.

The first difficulty lies with the industrial sector itself and stems mainly from the fact that many industrialists have invested a great deal in machines only later learn that they cannot operate more than 60 per cent of them, Mr. Asfour said. He said that industrialists have also been unable to ensure constant maintenance of the machines, with subsequent reduced production.

The second type of difficulty lies with shortages in the amounts of raw materials, the complicated routine at the customs department upon the importation of such materials, the difficulty in marketing products and the inability to compete in foreign markets due to lack of research programmes that can help improve the quality of the manufactured



Mohammad Asfour

goods, Mr. Asfour said.

Jordanian industrialists, he said can overcome the first difficulty by giving increased attention to training workers in technical matters so that sufficient cadres can be found to conduct the required maintenance. Mr. Asfour said that the second type of difficulty can be overcome if industrialists give more attention to the quality

of manufactured goods, which should conform to the acceptable standards in foreign markets.

At the same time, the federation announced that it has prepared a working paper designed to help stimulate trade. The paper to be submitted to the ministers of industry and trade and health will deal with problems Jordanian merchants encounter, especially in the supply field.

According to federation sources, the paper gives suggestions about testing samples of food supplies imported from other countries and facilities to be adopted in the process of clearing imported goods at customs posts.

The federation also announced that it will participate in a five-day meeting by the Federation of Arab Chambers of Trade, Industry and Agriculture, which will open in Beirut on Oct. 1. Mr. Asfour will lead the federation's delegation to the Beirut meeting, the announcement said.

It added that the delegation was due to leave Amman for Beirut on Sept. 30.

Government invites private companies to take part in telecommunications projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government Monday formally invited the private sector to join the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) in implementing its projects in Jordan.

The announcement was made at a meeting held at the Amman Chamber of Industry presided over by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport and Communications Ali Subeihat and TCC Director Mohammad Shahid Ismail.

The announcement said that it is the intention of the government to allow the private sector to invest in the telecommunications sector through revenue-sharing schemes and special agreements in which the private sector can undertake the responsibilities of financing, constructing, managing, operating and maintaining a number of existing as well as new telecommunication projects in Jordan.

Ministry to offer 'incentive plan' to doctors

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 600 doctors working for government hospitals and health centres in Jordan will benefit from the Health Ministry's decision Sunday granting them a 60 per cent allowance on their salaries, according to Minister of Health Mamdouh Al Abbadi.

The minister said that doctors appointed to their posts since Jan. 1, 1987 are entitled to the allowance, which was approved in order to help improve doctors' general conditions.

The Ministry of Health is now seeking to cover all the doctors in hospital and health centres in Jordan under a new "incentives system" to offer them more benefits, the minister said. A special committee has been formed to propose a system by which all doctors employed by the government will be treated on equal footing, the minister said.

He added that these measures will pave the way for new legislation that would offer doctors incentives to meet their needs and so the ministry can have enough specialists. He said that specialists have been shunning work with the ministry due to the low salaries it offers, but the ministry is now struggling to provide doctors and specialists with incentives to offer better services. The 60 per cent allowance drew appreciation from the president of the Jordanian Medical Association.

JVA announces new water conservation measures

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Monday announced new measures for water distribution in the valley to deal with the serious water shortage in the King Talal Dam, which is now estimated at 12 million cubic metres out of a total reservoir capacity of 86 million.

JVA Secretary General Abdul Aziz Wishah said that only 1,500 agricultural units, or nearly 60,000 dunums out of an estimated 60,000 dunums, will be supplied with irrigation water from the dam in the October and November agricultural season.

In order to compensate farmers and land owners that would not be supplied with water, the JVA will rent the land from them for a sum of JD 20 per dunum, Dr. Wishah said.

The JVA was forced to resort to this stringent method in view of the serious water shortage but it is, at the same time, concerned about continuing to supply sufficient water for selected areas so that production will not be affected in the coming two months, Dr. Wishah said.

Dr. Wishah added that under this programme, only 210 cubic metres of water each week can be supplied to an agricultural unit, which ranges between 30 to 40 dunums, so that the JVA can

ensure sufficient water supplies to all the lands included under the programme.

However, Dr. Wishah noted that the new measure is subject to adjustment depending on the amounts of water the country receives in the coming winter season.

He also said that, under the new measure, the JVA will pay a total of JD 7,000 in compensation to farmers whose lands will not be utilised in the coming two

months.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kassar told a meeting in the Jordan Valley town of Deir Alla last week that the water in the King Talal Dam was partly salty but salinity has not yet reached the red line. He said that the JVA was now mixing this water with that from Yarmouk River before supplying it to Jordan Valley farmlands. He added that this measure would continue until the end of October.

Minister visits archaeological sites

AMMAN (Petra) — Tourism and Antiquities Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti Monday visited two archaeological sites in Jabal Al Qal'a and Jabal Luweibdeh in Amman.

The minister, who was accompanied by Director General of the Antiquities Department Safwan Al Tal, first inspected archaeological sites in Jabal Al Qal'a (mountain of the fortress) where the department is carrying out excavation and renovation works. Jabal Al Qal'a and the

area surrounding it contain antiquities dating back to the oldest civilisations that settled in Jordan.

The Antiquities Department is working in cooperation with several scientific teams to preserve the castle and turn it into an archaeological and touristic centre in order to give tourists and citizens alike the chance to get familiarised with the civilisations that settled in Jordan since the year 6,000 B.C., when the Ammonites ruled the area.

World Food Programme to help Jordan develop pasture lands

AMMAN (J.T.) — The World Food Programme (WFP) plans to help Jordan carry out a second five-year programme to develop its highland agricultural regions and expand the forest and pasture lands in order to promote meat production.

Sources close to a WFP team currently visiting Jordan said that a proposal to be submitted to the Jordanian government Wednesday suggests that the WFP will spend \$6.4 million in the coming five years to help Jordan achieve that goal.

The second part of the programme, which will begin by the middle of 1992, entails the development of 150,000 dunums of rangeland, improving agriculture in another 120,000 dunums and the production of 35 million forest tree saplings.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the WFP team met with Minister of Agriculture Subhi Al Qasem and discussed the programme. Dr. Qasem stressed that the Jordanian government was keen on developing pasture land and drilling artesian wells as well as collecting rain water to help create pastures for animal grazing.

The Ministry of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO), has carried out its share in the previous five year programme in implementation with the first agreement with the WFP, Dr. Qasem said.

He added that the team has recommended continued WFP assistance to Jordan to help it develop its pasture lands and to expand forest areas which now

only make up 0.8 per cent of the total area of Jordan. The team, the minister said, has recommended that more artesian wells be drilled and proper measures be taken to collect rain water in the pasture areas.

Ministry of Agriculture sources said that the first part of the programme entailed planting forest trees on 100,000 dunums of dry land and another 130,000 dunums with shrubs. The WFP provided \$4.5 million worth of food supplies to farmers including wheat, flour, canned cheese or meat, pulses, sugar and tea.

The WFP is expected to wind up its meetings with Jordanian officials on Wednesday when an agreement on the implementation of the second phase of the programme will be signed.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition of naive painting from Germany at Abdel Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Omar Boust at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Nidal Jamous at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of ceramics by Iraqi artist Salama Al

Nouri at Alla Art Gallery.

★ Exhibition of paintings and ceramics by Iraqi artists Nadim Muhsen, Halim Mahdi and Haider Al Munsour at Hotel Jordan Intercontinental.

CONCERT

★ Piano recital by Erika Frieser at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.

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Beware, crime on the rise

JORDAN, its cities and towns including the capital Amman, has always prided itself in being safe and practically crime free. In days past, people would leave the doors of their homes unlocked and their cars and other possessions unattended without worrying too much about thefts and burglaries. The national psychology then was that of relative peace and harmony in every aspect of life in the entire country. Arab and non-Arab residents enjoyed living in Amman but most of all because of its cleanliness, fresh air and above all its safety record.

All this has unfortunately changed in the last few years. Gone are the days when Jordanians and other residents of the country would take for granted own personal safety or the security or sanctity of their homes and other properties.

There are obviously a multitude of reasons for this change for the worse and they can all be dubbed as socio-economic in nature. Yet the overriding culprit is the lack of adequate response from the government to the natural and sudden transformations that have occurred over the years especially in the last few years in the Jordanian society. As the dynamics of modernisation in the country has taken its logical toll on the traditions and mores of the people, so has the abrupt influx of foreign workers, expatriates and returnees. Amman for example appears about bursting at the seams due to its rapid expansion in size and population. Such dramatic metamorphosis would normally require an appropriate response from those authorities directly concerned with the safety of the citizens and residents alike. What can be observed, however, is that the police force of Amman for example has yet to increase its number and improve in quality in a manner proportionate to the increase in population and the crime rate that followed. Equally relevant is the complete lack of interest and effort to transform our thinking as citizens who take things for granted into a crime-fighting people with civic duties and obligations. There is every sense and advantage to augmenting internal security by fighting crime and criminals through raising the level of awareness of citizens, especially when we are not doing enough to prepare ourselves to face the consequences of a changing society.

Perhaps the primary reason for the increasing crime rate is the lack of sufficient funds and the inability of the central government to allocate enough resources to such concerns. It would be most unfortunate, however, if we continue to abandon such pressing problems till the crime rate in the country reaches new heights. By then the problem may become that much harder to rectify and much more expensive to deal with. Better act now when the issue is still controllable and the crisis manageable. Besides, internal security is a high priority issue that cannot be sacrificed no matter how high the cost is. Jordanians and their guests are entitled to more security especially from thieves who are roaming the streets of almost all urban areas of the country in record numbers. Jordanians naturally long for the good old days when they had no cause to fear what they do now. The government can still address this new and increasing danger and the sooner it puts its act together the better it would be for the country and its well being.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT is natural for the people of Jordan to support the Palestinian people's right to seek the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 which can ensure their rights to their homeland, said the Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday. The paper said that such demand by Palestinians and Jordanians here has aroused anger in Israel prompting its media to launch attacks on Jordan, accusing it of obstructing the peace process. The paper said that it is Israel's society which is divided over the peace conference and it is the Israeli government which is placing obstacles in the path of peace. The Jordanians and Palestinians are keen on achieving a permanent and just peace; they do not want to capitulate, but are keen on regaining the usurped Arab rights, said the paper. Israel said the paper has been launching propaganda campaigns against Jordan and accusing the Kingdom of obstructing peace while its settlement building goes unabated in the occupied Arab territories and it defies all peace bids by refusing to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions. The paper said that the Jordanians are united in their quest for peace and are determined to seek a genuine peace based on justice, but can by no means accept capitulation.

THE whole world is nowadays buying itself with the famine staring the Soviet people in the face and trying to help the Soviet people overcome the economic difficulties before the coming winter season, said a columnist in Al Dastour daily Monday. Munes Al Razaz said that the European Community is trying to supply food to the Soviets and the United States is trying to find means to alleviate the sufferings of the Soviet people, like financing projects in the Soviet Union. The writer said that it is natural for people around the world to come to the aid of others in distress and in need or facing natural disasters, but such sympathy seems to be directed towards the Soviets alone these days. The writer said that sympathy is expressed towards the Soviets, who are not exposed to aggression, but not a finger is lifted to help the Iraqis who face starvation following a devastating war. The double standard dealing on the part of the world community can by no means represent human justice in any form, he said. Should Baghdad give up its affiliation to its Arab roots and succumb to Washington's will so that it can become entitled to receiving aid? asked the writer. Should the Iraqi people follow in the footsteps of the Soviet people in order to avoid starvation and the economic embargo? he added. He said it seems that the United States wants Iraq to be transformed into an American colony, like Kuwait, in order to secure Washington's satisfaction and meet its requirements for survival.

Israel shaken to discover U.S. aid is not automatic

By Jack Redden
Reuters

JERUSALEM — Israel was so certain of U.S. aid earlier this month that officials termed it a duty and added two billion dollars from U.S. loan guarantees into next year's budget.

Now, Washington's demand for political concessions in return for loan guarantees has shocked Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's government into realising that American largesse — \$10 billion in help over the years — cannot be taken for granted.

"I very much hope the argument over guarantees will not spill over to other aid that the U.S. grants us in the field of defence purchases and economic aid," Defence Minister Moshe Arens said at the weekend.

No one in President George Bush's administration is yet questioning the \$1.8 billion in military

grants and \$1.2 billion in annual economic grants, but the dispute over loan guarantees has focused attention on the fact that Israel receives more U.S. aid than any other country.

The battle at present is over Israel's request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees, two billion a year starting in 1992.

Officially the cost to the United States would be small — a small percentage of the obligation must be included in the U.S. budget in case Israel defaults. U.S. backing for the loans means Israel can borrow at lower interest rates.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Israel correctly says it has never failed to pay its debts. However, it glosses over the U.S. rescue package of the 1980s which ensured Israel kept that record intact.

The United States has given

Israel financial assistance throughout its 43-year history, but the large amounts came after it nearly lost the 1973 Middle East war and following the peace treaty with Egypt in 1979.

By 1985 Israel's economy was in disarray and it faced crushing debts on U.S. military supplies. Washington converted future military aid to grants and added in economic aid to pay the interest on its previous U.S. debts.

Through effective lobbying by Israel's supporters in Congress, that basic three billion dollars per year has been continually augmented by extra payments and easier terms.

Aid to Israel, for example, is the only foreign assistance given in total at the beginning of the fiscal year. That allows Israel to earn some \$100 million in interest, while the U.S. government must borrow to finance the aid.

By 1989, AIPAC, the main pro-Israeli pressure group in Washington, boasted of securing \$3.66 billion in aid. Mr. Bush, attacking the lobbying for loan guarantees this month, said Israel this year had received more than four billion dollars — \$1,000 for every Israeli man, woman and child.

Massive U.S. aid came to be regarded as automatic, a view reinforced by pledges of support from pro-Israeli U.S. legislators streaming to the Jewish state, frequently at the invitation of AIPAC.

"There is a perception problem," said a Western diplomat. "It's not the sceptics they are meeting here every week. It's the gung-ho supporters and if you talk to them that's the impression you get."

Confrontation was looming. Mr. Shamir was driving to settle Jews on occupied land so it could

never be returned, while, Mr. Bush saw an opportunity to end decades of Arab-Israeli war by Israel exchanging Arab land captured in 1967 for guarantees of peace.

When Mr. Bush hinted he was willing to use U.S. economic leverage to get his way, Mr. Shamir's response was to ignore the U.S. leader and count on Israeli support in congress.

Israel took Mr. Bush seriously only after he vowed to veto congressional loan guarantees for the Jewish state unless consideration was delayed 120 days. The animosity is unequalled since President Dwight Eisenhower forced Israel to return the Sinai it had seized from Egypt in a 1956 invasion.

Perhaps Israel did not see the danger signs because it had grown complacent after the half-hearted pressure applied by past U.S. administrations, which rarely did

more than slow military supplies to protest against Israeli policies.

Under President Ronald Reagan, Israel even gained a new status, a 'partner' in a strategic alliance to counter Soviet influence in the Middle East. Times have changed.

The Soviet threat has disappeared and, rather than helping U.S. policy, ties to Israel were a liability a year ago when Washington tried to orchestrate Arab opposition to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

"This is not the beginning of a crisis," said Hebrew University Professor Gabi Sheffer. "It's a slow deterioration in this special relationship."

The United States, home to more Jews than Israel, is not about to abandon the Jewish state, but the previous level of support may no longer be there. For a country addicted to U.S. aid, that is a frightening prospect.

U.S. being drawn into helping Soviet Union

By Rich Miller
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The United States is slowly being boxed into doing more to help the shattered Soviet economy as Moscow meets the conditions Washington has laid down for aid one by one.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev last week promised to withdraw his country's troops

from Cuba while Russian leader Boris Yeltsin pledged to resolve a dispute with Japan over four islands seized from Tokyo at the end of World War II.

The islands dispute and aid to Cuba were two of the issues cited by President George Bush at the July Moscow summit as obstacles to improved relations. Mr. Bush has been effusive in

his praise of Moscow since the failed coup by Soviet hardliners last month but has so far not come up with much in the way of concrete help for the country.

"Now is the time to back up our rhetoric with action," said Robert Hunter of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies think-tank in Washington. Treasury Secretary Nicholas

Brady and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan are flying to Moscow on Tuesday to meet Mr. Gorbachev. Mr. Yeltsin and other senior officials for talks on economic reforms.

Administration officials sought to play down expectations that the four-day visit would lead to any major new aid initiatives for the Soviet Union.

But they voiced hopes that it would lead to a meeting next month between Soviet officials and economic policymakers from major industrial nations where help for the country's crippled economy is likely to be high on the agenda.

Much of the pressure on Mr. Bush to do more for the Soviet Union has come from America's allies in Europe, particularly Germany and Italy.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl repeated his previous appeals for Western economic aid for the Soviet Union ahead of a meeting with Mr. Bush in the White House on Monday.

"The latest developments lead to the conclusion the West must help the democratic and economic future of the Soviet Union in a united, speedy and comprehensive way," he said.

The United States has long maintained that aid for the Soviet Union would only end up being wasted until the country reformed its economy and did away with the inefficient methods of state control.

But recently, Washington has softened that position, saying that the Soviet Union must only commit itself to reforms, not actually carry them out, to be eligible for aid.

"If they are prepared to ... commit (themselves) to taking the actions that are required ... we will join others in assisting the

(economic) transformation," Secretary of State James Baker said last week. "They don't have to take the steps first but commit to taking the steps."

Pro-democracy forces in the Soviet Union have warned the United States and its industrial allies that hardliners could stage a comeback if economic reforms fail to improve the lot of the Soviet man on the street and put bread on the table.

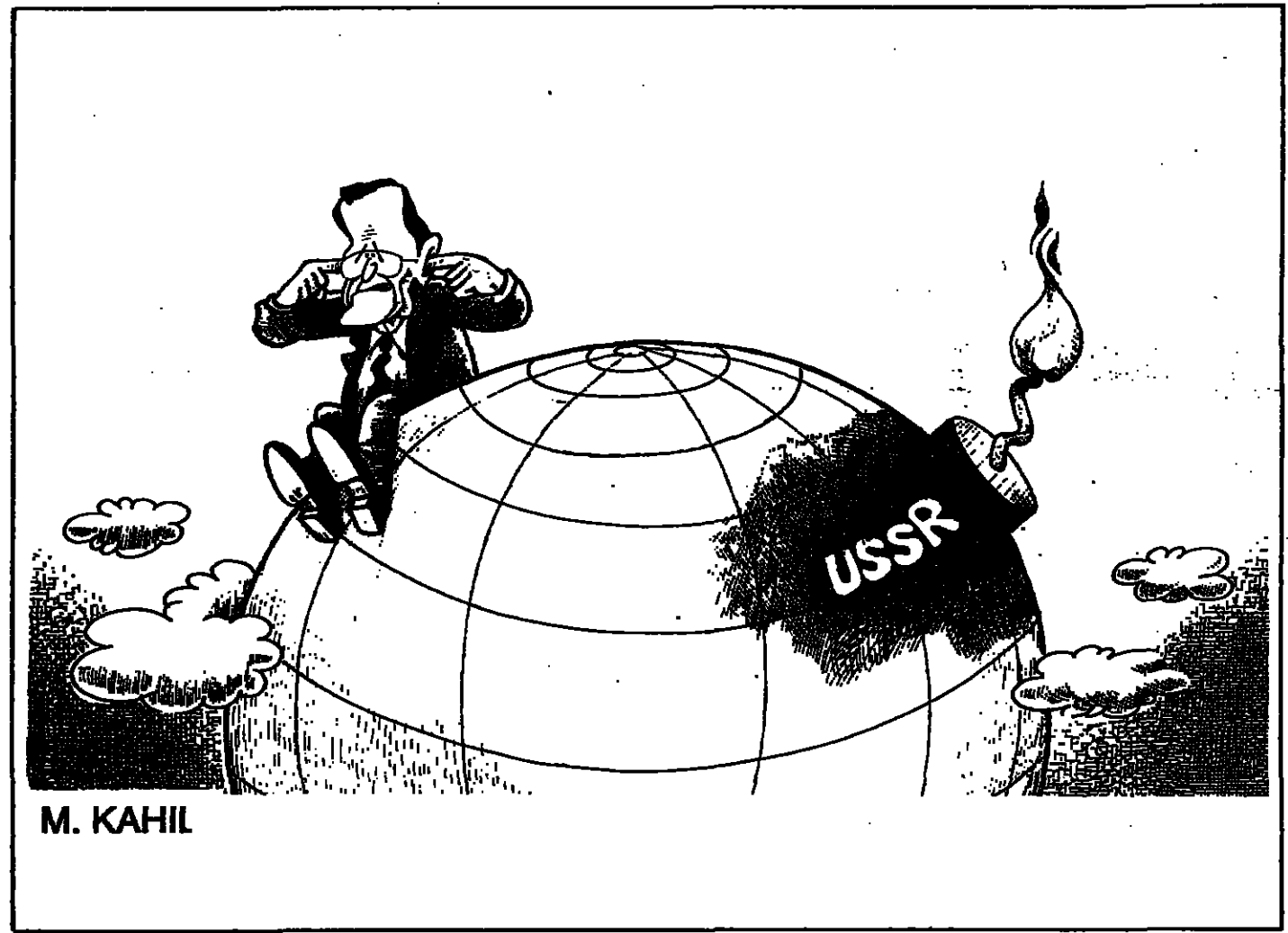
Eduard Shevardnadze, a leader of the new democratic reform movement and a former Soviet foreign minister, said that winter hardship as a result of shortages of food and fuel could be exploited by opponents of democracy.

The Soviet central government has asked for between \$6.1 billion and \$7.3 billion of food aid to help prevent hunger this winter. "People could take to the streets spontaneously. No one could predict the outcome," Mr. Shevardnadze said.

Such warnings have struck a chord among some U.S. officials travelling with Mr. Baker in the Soviet Union.

They said that Washington is considering a project to show quickly that life can improve under a free market system, such as facilitating food distribution in a major city.

"We have an enormous stake in these guys succeeding," one senior official said.



Yugoslavia crisis spotlights European, NATO security dilemma

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuters

BRUSSELS — Why is Europe unable to bring a halt to the killing in Yugoslavia?

The crisis, seen by many as a test of how the continent can manage its own security, has focused attention on major dilemmas worrying NATO, the European Community and a new forum, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Diplomats say that attempts to broker a ceasefire so far have failed because the warring factions in Yugoslavia lack either the will or the ability to stop fighting. Now, European nations have turned to the United Nations.

"The idea of managing European security, what everyone was talking about when the cold war ended, is being put to a very severe test," said one NATO diplomat. "All of the various organisations have to ask some tough questions now."

For NATO, the question is whether the world's only functioning military alliance can afford to stand on the sidelines as Yugoslavia falls apart and politicians warn that similar conflicts could flare in the Balkans or Eastern Europe.

For the European Community, analysts say, this week's refusal to

send peace-keeping forces to Yugoslavia has again raised questions about whether the 12-nation bloc really can take on a defence and security role for the first time.

The 38-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which has gained credibility only since the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, has been powerless to act, limited by the need for consensus.

German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, aware of this weakness, has suggested setting up a pan-European peace-keeping force, guided by a CSCE security council modelled on the United Nations.

At the root of these problems are deep divisions among Western European countries and with the United States about how to keep the peace — and, if necessary, make it — in what is an increasingly unstable post-cold war world.

NATO nations cannot agree whether the 16-nation alliance should be able to go beyond the defence of its own territory, a rule which kept it out of any direct role in the Gulf war.

Martin McCusker, a defence expert at the Brussels-based North Atlantic Assembly, said Western public opinion would no longer accept NATO's insistence

that it must remain to face new, undefined risks now that the old Soviet threat is gone.

"If there is open civil war in Yugoslavia and we have the forces, but are not ready to send them in, then this raises questions about whether NATO is living in cloud-cuckoo land," he told Reuters.

Western taxpayers could be unwilling to continue financing a military alliance that talks about "crisis management" and new threats to stability in Europe, but cannot back up words with action until its own territory is directly affected, he said.

NATO has pledged to adapt to a new role after decades of defending against the Soviet threat and the tricky question of wider responsibilities will come up at a Rome summit of alliance leaders in November.

The United States, as NATO's senior member, has also been reluctant to get involved in Yugoslavia, saying it is a question for European nations to solve. It is also tiring of its role as the world's policeman, diplomats say.

NATO officials vigorously deny suggestions, as they did during the Gulf war, that the alliance is not playing the part it should on the international stage.

"We have had continuous political consultations and if Euro-

pean nations agreed to send troops, they would have to draw on our expertise in many areas, not to mention forces currently assigned to NATO tasks," said one official.

While the United States and Britain want to see NATO play a wider role, France — which resents U.S. leadership of the alliance — is strictly opposed. It wants to create a more independent European voice on defence and some other nations agree.

As for the European Community, it has tried, without success so far, to broker a ceasefire agreement.

At a community meeting in the Hague Thursday, a plan to send peace-keeping forces under the Western European union's command was shelved because several countries had reservations about the risks involved.

Analysts said the fact that the European Community discussed military matters for the first time in its 34-year history represented progress towards a common foreign and perhaps defence policy, as part of plans for greater integration.

But McCusker said he thought the meeting had shown how hard it would be to set this up. "I don't think it will have done the advocates of rapid moves towards an EC defence identity any good," he said.

LETTERS

Different feelings

Dear Sir,

The article published on Sept. 11 in the Jordan Times: "Rafah — the infidels rage on" brought to my mind a question I would like to ask through your paper. Why was the U.S. so outraged at China's alleged savage treatment of the protesters in Tiananmen Square while it seems not to notice Israel's licentious activities in the occupied Arab territories. The Tiananmen events lasted for a week and less than 20 people were said to be killed or injured. While I do not condone such acts, I am surprised that the 1,300 Palestinians killed and over 100,500 injured in the four years of infidels did not stir the same outrage. The heinous law enforcement methods of the Israelis against the Palestinians include shooting with glass-filled rubber bullets, throwing tear gas canisters in small, closed rooms housing children and women — some pregnant — and dropping baseball-size lead balls from helicopters with the purpose of maiming the demonstrating Palestinian teenagers. These cruel acts cannot be called democratic and seem not to be noticed by the U.S. Some Americans feel Israel is the country worth being granted a \$10 billion loan in guarantee. The aid will only be used to ensure that the atrocious behaviour of the Israeli government is perpetuated and increased.

Sincerely,

Ann Dabbas,
Amman.

Beggars cannot be choosers

Dear Sir,

Would it not be a good idea for the Bush administration to remind the Israelis of the proverb which says: "Beggars cannot be choosers?"

Yours sincerely,

George Khoury,
P.O. Box 17008,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

'Nothing is sacred but the truth'

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "It was the summer of 1968. I was coming back from an excavation trip near the Wailing Wall. It was very early in the morning: the streets were empty, except for myself, two Israeli soldiers and two little Palestinian girls walking to school. One of the girls was singing about Palestine. When the girls got to the road block one of the Israeli soldiers told the little girl to stop singing. The girl obeyed, but after she crossed the road block, thinking that she was out of the soldier's earshot, resumed her singing. Like an angry animal the soldier leapt at the defenceless little girl and hit her on the back of her head with the butt of his rifle. The little girl fell forward in a pool of blood. I ran to help the little child, but the soldier forced me to stand up by putting the gun barrel under my chin. 'You bastard go on your way, say nothing and do nothing,' he said to me with a New York accent. 'You are the bastard, you don't belong here.' I answered walking away slowly, without ever knowing what became of the little girl." William Baker, a noted scholar on Near East Archaeology and Biblical History recounted looking back at the story that changed the course of his life and political belief.

As a young man studying archaeology in Jerusalem's

Near East Institute, William Baker grew up with Palestinians and saw the injustices they suffered at the hands of Israeli occupying forces supported by his own country.

"I would return to the U.S. hoping to read some of the injustices I saw, but unfortunately I would hear nothing," Mr. Baker said.

His frustration grew as he became exposed to the ugly side of Zionism and the awkward silence of the entire world community over the fate of three million Palestinians living in the diaspora. "It is really ridiculous to see somebody like Golda Meir, who was born in Russia and brought up in Milwaukee, claim that her homeland is Palestine," Mr. Baker said. "I remember her being quoted in London Times in 1968, as saying 'Palestinians. What Palestinians? It is not as if we took any home or land from Palestinians. There are no Palestinians,' he added.

The culmination of his frustrations over the injustices he saw motivated him to write his first book on the Middle East in 1984 entitled "Theft of a Nation."

"I can still hear the tune of the two little Palestinian girls singing that early morning, so I wrote the book for them," Mr. Baker said.

"Theft of a Nation" is a book that traces the background of the Palestinian people and exposes Zionism to the

American public by highlighting the difference between it and Judaism.

"The book is for the American people, who are wonderful people, but are also wonderfully ignorant," Mr. Baker said.

The book also takes issue with leading television Evangelists like Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and others, who teach that the current Israeli state is an act of "fulfilled prophecy."

"The Bible never claimed to support the Israeli claims of 'Biblical prophecies' and 'God's chosen people.' What these people have done is twist the words of the Bible," Mr. Baker said.

The book also tackles the issue of peace and calls for the creation of two states. "Jews and Arabs lived together before in history. It is only now, with the creation of the state of Israel, that this seems to be impossible," Mr. Baker said.

The success of his book in the Middle East attracted the attention of many Arab leaders such as Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

His articulate and poignant speaking style has also attracted the attention of Hizbollah, making him the only known private U.S. citizen to be invited to Beirut in 1987 to meet with the leaders of the Hizbollah Party holding U.S.

hostages.

"I got a call at 2 a.m. in my hotel room in Syria, where I was invited to give a lecture, from Hizbollah commandos," Mr. Baker said. "They took me to Lebanon and I met with their leaders," he added saying that he had also offered himself in exchange for any Western hostages.

As a result of his meetings with Hizbollah leaders, he was contacted by Colonel Oliver North and met with President Reagan's Vice President George Bush in the White House. "I think they were scared that I would find out about the arms deals going on between them and the Iranians," Mr. Baker said.

Mr. Baker's staunch support for Palestinians has resulted in his life being threatened by radical pro-Israeli groups and individuals. The first attempt occurred in Detroit, Michigan, in 1985; the second was in 1989, and the most recent was in July of this year.

"I always look at it as something you have to live with if you seek truth and justice," Mr. Baker said, "because nothing is sacred but the truth."

Mr. Baker's next book, entitled "Deceptions in the Gulf" will expose the real story behind the Iraq-Kuwait conflict and the reasons behind Hizbollah, making him the only known private U.S. citizen to be invited to Beirut in 1987 to meet with the leaders of the Hizbollah Party holding U.S.

Socio-economic effects of labour migration

By Issat Dajani

"LABOUR migration in the Middle East is of a temporary nature rather than a permanent nature; it involves all types of workers who remain within the region, thus creating an internal flow of labour within developing countries." This was a statement by Professor N. Choucri of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in a 1986 address to the annual meeting of Population Association of America.

Jordan has a growth rate of nearly 3.5 per cent annum. The dependant population of 15 years old and under, constitutes nearly 50 per cent of the people. This situation will be further aggravated when the population of 15 years old enters its fertility loop. The high population growth rate is creating a tremendous growth in the domestic labour force leading to unemployment of valuable human resources and causing further drain on society. There is an expected increase in the working age population (age 15-64) from 1 million in 1979 to 2.3 million in 2000 and 5.5 million in the year 2025. When analysed, this means that there will be about 60,000 new job entrants every year. It is argued, however, that various social, developmental and cultural changes will all lead to a reduction in the fertility rate in the country and hence in the eventual numbers of annual new job entrants.

Education has become a major vehicle for upward mobility in Jordan. Recognising the importance of its human capital, the Jordanian government invested in the skills and technical ability of its people in order to satisfy the labour needs particularly in the oil producing Arab Gulf countries. Jordanians were even encouraged to acquire high technical and specialised skills that have no real relevance for or are needed in Jordan, but were highly demanded in the neighbouring countries, such as petroleum engineering.

In this context it must be emphasised that Jordan is now facing tremendous financial con-

straints and must reconsider its policies on education. The government should continue investing in primary education, but needs to reduce its subsidy of higher education, as this will lead to students choosing more responsibly among alternative education options.

In 1980, more than 400,000 Jordanian citizens were estimated to be residing abroad compared to about 60,000 in 1960. This massive labour migration was in response to a tremendous demand for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers in the oil-producing Arab countries as a result of the great increases in oil prices and the ambitious infrastructure plans in those countries. Jordanians remained very mobile over the last three decades in seeking employment with the objective of achieving higher earnings than those attainable at home. The more the country trained workers, the more they left for abroad after acquiring a marketable skill. But as Jordan has a limited productive base, coupled with limited natural resources, the government opted for liberal policies on labour migration, foreign exchange and trade. It neglected somehow the fact that a labour exporting economy is very volatile and highly unpredictable. This also entailed that these people would return to Jordan once their contracts terminated, adding further to the complexities of the domestic labour market.

Jordanians, after working abroad, returned with increased skills, advanced ideas, and accumulated savings, enabling them to buy homes and possibly start businesses. The country opened its doors to "replacement migration" especially to the unskilled workers from other Arab countries, primarily Egypt. The scarcity of labour in the country produced real wage increases in all sectors, with most income groups benefiting fairly evenly from the economic growth. The problem that remains for Jordan orbits around the fact that most foreign workers occupy unskilled positions which cannot be filled by returning skilled Jordanians.

There needs to be an attitudinal change among Jordanians to accept jobs considered 'menial.' Vocational training and skill upgrading must be among the government's main priorities, although past records show that these have been largely misplaced.

In 1978, remittances from workers accounted for 34 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP). They averaged \$1 billion per year from 1975-1980, enabling Jordan's economy to grow over 10 per cent annum. Remittances were further encouraged as they were exempted from taxation. The stability in the Jordanian economy and political structure were added encouragements. The government also had three and five-year plans that were promising. Private sector participation was encouraged. It was given 45 per cent of government projects in 1980. However, Jordan failed to mobilise the flow of remittances towards more productive uses. Much of it was spent on imports of consumer goods and less on real investments. The country relied on incentives rather than state control to encourage and mobilise remittances. The introduction of the Post Office Fund and the issuance of Development Bonds showed some government commitment to encouraging the inflow of remittances for their use as productive investment through the state. As oil revenues have declined since 1985, it followed that real wages declined, too. Since Jordanian skilled workers had their families with them, and under the prevailing economic situation, reduction of oil prices and instability of the Jordanian economy, they either ceased remitting or just transferred the absolute necessary amounts to Jordan. They ended up saving or investing their savings in the country of employment or in the industrialised West.

As Jordan has a labour force growing by more than five to six per cent per annum, coupled with a manpower demand increasing by two and a half per cent per annum, the result was a rapidly increasing

surplus of labour in the country, largely among white collar workers, and a significant shortage in blue collar workers. The immediate impact of the economic slow down in neighbouring countries led to substantial weakening in domestic and external demand for Jordanian labour. Oil-rich states only needed skilled Jordanians when they were building their infrastructures. Their demand now is centred around managerial and technical professionals to help in the management and maintenance of those infrastructures.

No matter how adverse the labour situation becomes, the government should always offer improved domestic opportunities for Jordanian workers. The immediate response is to stimulate overall economic growth and expansion of labour-intensive activities. Medium and small scale industries and services which are based on skills must be encouraged. Industries need to be export-oriented due to the small domestic market. Wages should remain reasonably low in order to maintain low production costs and thus improve the competitiveness of Jordan's exports; the government must resist pressures for wage increases. The government needs to encourage investment of foreign capital in the country. This could be achieved through tax cuts and rebates, elimination of import protection and export subsidies, and potential for exchange rates to carry the main burden of adjustment between domestic and international price levels. The speed with which this is accomplished will decide to a large extent the rate of overall economic growth and future labour demand.

Jordan is faced with limitations in agricultural potential, scope for out-migration, and its ability for further labour absorption. The retrenchment of demand for migrant labour and the potential new trend towards return migration are among the most serious considerations entrusted to the government and certainly need thorough appreciation and analysis in order to establish effective policies.

Jordan, Yemen explore integration

(Continued from page 1)

The committee will also supervise the implementation of an industrial scheme designed to manufacture electrical transformers in Yemen.

Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb told Petra after the meeting that the committee reviewed topics included in earlier bilateral agreement which were not implemented because of the Gulf crisis which brought about economic difficulties for both Yemen and Jordan.

The two countries will promote trade exchange and Jordan will organise trade fairs in Sana'a to

promote the sale of national products, the minister said.

According to Yemeni Minister of Industry and Trade Fadel Mubsen Abdullah, Yemen will offer facilities to Jordan to market its products like medicines, fertilisers, food supplies and cement and to hold a trade fair in Sana'a. Yemen will also offer major facilities to Jordanian businessmen to initiate industrial, agricultural, commercial and transport projects in Yemen, the minister said.

Following the meetings Mr. Abul Ragheb and Mr. Abdullah signed minutes of the committee's deliberations.

Europeans urge Palestinians to attend

(Continued from page 1)

already expressed readiness to attend but the issue of Palestinian representation has not yet been solved.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker last week completed his seventh trip to the region to try to finalise details for the proposed conference. Despite several meetings with Palestinian representatives from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the occupied territories and here in Amman, Mr. Baker was not able to provide Palestinians with the assurances they are seeking before agreeing to participate in the conference.

Prof. Nianias, flanked by other members of the delegation at a press conference, urged the PNC to cooperate with Jordan, which he repeatedly said had one of the most constructive roles to play in the peace process.

"There is one product that in this world is very, very scarce and that is wisdom," he said. "However, we feel that the Kingdom has wisdom in abundant supply that is ready to be exported."

Prof. Nianias said Jordan was the one state in the region that can play a constructive role in bringing about a "fair solution in political, historical and economic terms."

Jordan, he said, was the one state that could help bridge the various differences between the Palestinians and Israelis to bring about peace and understanding.

"Anyone who refuses to understand the important role of Jordan (in the peace process) is only confusing the situation," said Prof. Nianias, who met with His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Taher Masi and other officials during his visit to the Kingdom.

Citing the "tragic situation" resulting from the mass return of expatriates to Jordan, Prof. Nianias said the EC should provide financial assistance to the Kingdom to help it cope with the returnees.

While continually addressing the current peace process and Europe's role, Prof. Nianias stressed that the European Community's (EC) interest in the region goes beyond the peace efforts.

The European Parliament is hopeful a peaceful solution can be found so the region would develop its resources, a process Europe is hopeful of helping Middle Eastern countries accomplish, he said.

Responding to a question about the European Parliament's stand towards the continued building of settlements in the occupied Arab territories, Jan Sonneveld, a member of the delegation, said that the European Parliament considers them illegal.

Mr. Sonneveld also said the European Parliament was pressing for "economic" recognition of Palestinian political rights. "We are very sensitive to this problem and we have followed it here," he said.

The European delegation Monday left for Damascus.

PNC opens crucial session

(Continued from page 1)

said. "Palestinians are not ready to be part of this comedy."

In the occupied territories, Palestinians sent conflicting messages Monday to the PNC.

The Islamic fundamentalist movement Hamas and radical leftists urged the PNC meeting to reject the U.S. initiative. Supporters on mainstream PLO factions demanded a conditional yes to the proposal.

"We call upon our sincere brothers in the PNC to boycott it (the conference) and announce their rejection of all resolutions that deny our people's rights to Palestine and Jerusalem," Hamas said in a press statement.

But Saeb Erekat, a mainstream PLO supporter, said the PNC should set guidelines for Palestinians to take part in peace talks.

"We are a people who want peace more than anybody else in this area, but we also have clear principles on which peace efforts should be based," he told an East

Jerusalem news conference.

Leftists at the same news conference questioned Washington's ability to act as an honest broker in proposed October talks given its traditional support for Israel.

Hamas, which is not represented on the PNC, is a driving force behind the Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule that began in the occupied territories in December 1987.

The calls reflect a debate which has been raging among the 1.75 million Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip since Mr. Baker launched his Middle East peace mission after the Gulf war.

Meanwhile the PLO is negotiating indirectly with Israel to allow Palestinian leaders from the Israeli-occupied territories to speak via satellite to the PNC in Algiers, delegates said Monday.

"There is a possibility they could speak to us via satellite. Negotiations are still under way," one delegate told Reuters. He did not say who was mediating between Israel and the PLO.

Bush-calls on U.N. to repeal resolution

(Continued from page 1)

tribute to the United Nations for its steadfastness in the liberation of Kuwait and its aggressive new role in conducting regional peacekeeping missions.

Last year, Mr. Bush used his U.N. address to demand Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait, and again this time Iraq demanded Mr. Bush's immediate attention. A sense of urgency arose with the disclosure that Iraq detained a team of U.N. nuclear weapons inspectors in a building in Baghdad Monday after they seized documents apparently proving that Iraq was developing nuclear weapons.

The Security Council has ordered the destruction of Iraq's nuclear and chemical arms capability.

However, Mr. Bush's U.N. address contained "no ultimatum" for Iraq.

Mr. Bush's call to repeal the 16-year-old resolution that branded Zionism "a form of rac-

ism and racial discrimination" is meant to resolve a longstanding sore point between Israel and the Arab World, U.S. officials said.

White House officials denied it was an attempt to repair U.S.-Israeli relations strained by Mr. Bush's insistence that Congress delay considering \$10 billion in housing loan guarantees for Israel until after a peace conference is under way.

The repeal move is "not a payback," said one official who asked not to be identified. "It's part of a strategic move for preparing the ground for a serious Middle East peace negotiation."

Mr. Bush hopes the peace talks will start next month, but Secretary of State James Baker returned from a seventh trip to the Middle East without clearing the last barriers.

The United States has long opposed Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

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PALESTINIAN ENTERTAINMENT

By Renters

Senna is wi

thin sight o

Bennica opened the scoring in the 51st minute when striker Antonio Pacheco headed in a cross from the right.

Goran Prpic and Goran Ivanisevic.
Agassi's new attitude developed in part from conversa-



mind," Agassi said of the last point Sunday, "was just a sense of relief, a feeling of accomplishment."

on hard courts, said his victory knocked "the monkey off his back."

"It's got to relieve some of the

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll-Righter Foundation

THE BETTER HALF **By Harris**

"I think Nigel chose the wrong

THE ANSWER WAS "TEN MILLION"

SORRY, MA'AM... I ALWAYS LIKE TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION..

SIX OF ONE ...

SORRY, MA'AM... I ALWAYS LIKE TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION...

SCALPE

7.26

NO, THANKS, LAID - I STILL WANT TO BE IN A NASTY TEMPER WHEN HE GETS HERE.

O.K., O.K. - DON'T GET EXCITED! I'LL BUY YOUR CAR! HERE'S A DOLLAR!

A DOLLAR? DO YOU KNOW WHAT CARS COST?

NO, BUT YOU CAN KEEP CHANGE.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, BUT I CAN'T TAKE IT!

Phil Witte

[illegible]

MINDS HIS SPEECH

57 Carnus, Saurie 19 — Ben Adhem
et al. 24 "When I —
60 Pifaf base was —
61 Rocky crog 25 Metal

1. *Chlorophyll a* (Chl *a*)

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Singapore Close
Sterling Pound	1.7310	1.7397
Deutsche Mark	1.6844	1.6785
Swiss Franc	1.4705	1.4645
French Franc	5.7405	5.7253
Japanese Yen	137.17	136.00
European Currency Unit	1.2155	1.2188

USD Per STG
European Opening @ 9:00 a.m. GMT
Eurocurrency Interest Rates

23/9/1991

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.43	5.37	5.68	5.75
Sterling Pound	10.50	10.06	9.93	9.93
Deutsche Mark	9.12	9.12	9.25	9.25
Swiss Franc	8.00	7.93	8.06	7.62
French Franc	9.12	9.25	9.31	9.37
Japanese Yen	6.33	6.50	6.25	6.00
European Currency Unit	9.90	9.87	9.81	9.87

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

23/9/1991

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	349.25	6.80	Silver	4.13	.090

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

23/9/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.687	.689
Sterling Pound	1.1921	1.1981
Deutsche Mark	.4084	.4104
Swiss Franc	.4678	.4701
French Franc	.1199	.1205
Japanese Yen	.5120	.5146
Dutch Guilder	.3625	.3643
Swedish Krona	.1113	.1119
Italian Lira	.0547	.0550
Belgian Franc	.01968	.01978

Other Currencies

23/9/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7700	1.7750
Lebanese Lira	.0765	.0775
Saudi Riyal	.1828	.1837
Kuwaiti Dinar	---	---
Qatari Riyal	.1861	.1874
Egyptian Pound	.2000	.2100
Omani Rial	1.7272	1.7350
UAE Dirham	.1861	.1874
Greek Drachma	.3500	.3700
Cypriot Pound	1.4500	1.4700

Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Markets

22/9/1991

Index	18/9/1991	22/9/1991
All-Share	118.17	118.16
Banking Sector	98.99	99.12
Insurance Sector	119.94	120.29
Industry Sector	147.19	146.97
Services Sector	127.14	126.93

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.7430/40	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1340/45	Canadian dollar
	1.6743/50	Deutschmarks
	1.8865/75	Dutch guilders
	1.4600/10	Swiss francs
	34.50/54	Belgian francs
	5.7000/50	French francs
	1253/1254	Italian lire
	133.70/80	Japanese yen
	6.1000/50	Swedish crowns
	6.5520/70	Norwegian crowns
	6.4620/70	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	349.05/349.45	U.S. dollars



George Vassiliou

Luxury, other taxes to trim '92 Cypriot budget gap

NICOSIA (R) — Cyprus will introduce a luxury tax and raise charges for government services in 1992 to trim the government's budget deficit.

The new measures, which include a 20 per cent luxury tax and increases in airport tax and road licences, are in the 1992 budgets to be put to the house of representatives this week.

President George Vassiliou said the new taxes would raise about 40 million pounds (\$85 million).

He said this would cut the fiscal deficit by about 34 million pounds (\$73 million) to 102 million (\$218 million), or 3.5 per cent of GDP (gross domestic product), from 136 million (\$296 million) or 5.1 per cent of GDP in 1991.

The fiscal deficit is the net deficit from all the budgets and other accounts, including the Social Security Fund.

The three budgets — ordinary, development and the refugee fund — forecast expenditure of \$71.4 million pounds (\$1.8 billion) and revenue of \$60.7 million pounds (\$1.3 billion), leaving a deficit of 251.7 million pounds (\$537 million), against 251.3 million (\$494 million) in 1991.

Mr. Vassiliou said 23.5 per cent of the budgets will go to social services and housing, 7.4 per cent to health and 13.3 per cent education.

"This shows that Cyprus is a welfare state which compares favourably with developed states in Europe," Mr. Vassiliou said.

He said the government was again emphasizing development, with the development budget rising from 91.1 million pounds (\$194 million) to 122.3 million pounds (\$261 million).

Government revenue in 1992 includes 15 million pounds (\$32 million) from value added tax, expected to be introduced in the second half of 1992 at a rate of five per cent.

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — While their neighbours surge ahead, an impoverished group of Asian countries with more than 330 million people face uncertain prospects this decade despite attempts at economic reform, the World Bank says.

"The challenges confronting this Asian subgroup are cause for a tempering of the near-term optimism typically bestowed on the region's developing countries," said the bank's annual report.

Led by a \$989 million increase in loans for China, the World Bank extended a total of \$7.49 billion to Asia's developing countries during the fiscal year that ended June 30. That was up 17 per cent from the previous year and represented a third of the bank's worldwide lending.

The report said the shocks of the Gulf crisis imposed serious strains on Asia, including a sudden jump in oil prices and the loss of remittances from workers in the Middle East.

But it said the region's "rapidly industrialising open economies" — South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia — sustained their growth momentum based on prudent economic management, structural reforms and long-term investments.

Thailand and South Korea, for example, are both heavily dependent on foreign petroleum but weathered the price increases by, respectively, passing them on to consumers and using an oil price stabilisation fund.

The report said the private sectors of the four dynamic nations are enjoying an increasingly favourable environment, with the respective governments actively building up infrastructure.

Per capita incomes in those countries increased rapidly during the 1980s, while the proportion of the population living in poverty fell below 20 per cent.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh, Burma, Laos, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam suffered low and declining growth rates and "face uncertain or clouded prospects for the first years of the new decade as well," the report said.

The report cited several issues plaguing them: "The rise of serious macro imbalances, accentuated by the events in the Middle East; an increasingly ominous interaction between widespread poverty and population growth and accelerating environmental deterioration that threatens to undermine the productive basis of society."

The report said progress will require "exceptional skills" in managing economic policy and infrastructure investments, and the redirection of public spending toward family planning, rural social services, and environmental rehabilitation.

Many of the problems in these lower-income nations during the past year were due to bad policies, but the many other woes included natural disasters, political instability and wars against insurgents.

Fighting again took its toll in Sri Lanka, and a cyclone in Bangladesh killed at least 125,000 and devastated agriculture and infrastructure.

Nepal continued progress in structural reforms, but suffered from a trade dispute with India, higher oil prices and slower tourism, and the country's transformation from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy.

Nepalese per capita income will remain stagnant for the third successive year.

The report said bolder government policies promise improvement for the Philippines, but it was less optimistic about Vietnam: "Despite recent dramatic changes initiated by its far-reaching economic reform program that began in July 1990 ended in the April-June second quarter and another nine per cent believed it would end in the current third quarter."

They all agreed, however, that the recovery would be abnormally slow, primarily because of the U.S. central bank's tight money policy, the high debt load carried by consumers and reduced spending by federal, state and local governments.

Last month the Commerce Department reported that the economy contracted at a 0.1 per cent annual rate in the second quarter. That report on the gross national product is scheduled to be revised Thursday.

The consensus of the panel was for the economy to grow by a fairly modest 2.5 to 3.0 per cent over the next 12 months.

Only 11 per cent of the economists said there was a better-than-even chance of a "double dip" recession in which the economy would shrink after one or two quarters of growth. The other 89 per cent answered "no" when asked if they thought there was a better-than-even chance that the economy would slip back into a recession in the next 12 months.

Most respondents expected modest inflation with the consumer price index running at about 3.7 per cent next year and at an average of four per cent over the next five years.

On average, they also expected little change in the current low level of interest rates over the next two years, it said.

A slight majority of 56 per cent expected the dollar to hold steady over the next 12 months, while nearly 30 per cent expect it to rise.

White House Budget Director Richard Darman said Sunday, the U.S. economy began to recover from recession in May but not as vigorously as the Bush administration wants.

"I think the economy turned in

per cent in 1990, compared to gains of two per cent in 1988 and one per cent in 1989 in the Third World.

The poor economic showing was blamed on many factors, including the spillover effect from the economic slowdown in rich industrial countries and a disturbing slowdown in the growth of world trade.

But the report said many of the shocks came from the turmoil associated with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which sent oil prices soaring, disrupted trade flows and triggered a flood of refugees from the war zone.

The economic difficulties were widespread throughout the Third World. Only Asia's developing countries increased their per capita income, the report said.

The 18 countries in east Asia saw per capita incomes rise on average 4.3 per cent. The World Bank said slower-than-average growth in China had been offset by vigorous gains in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

The eight countries in south Asia, including India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, experienced a per capita income increase of 2.1 per cent in 1990, but the report warned that continued growth was threatened in India.

Developing countries in all other regions suffered declines in per capita income last year.

The biggest setback occurred in Latin America, where per capita incomes fell by 2.6 per cent in 1990. The report said the situation was most severe for Argentina, Brazil and Peru as their economies continued to be plagued by high debt burdens.

The nations of sub-Saharan Africa, including some of the poorest nations in the world, saw per capita incomes fall by 2.1 per cent last year while the developing countries in North Africa, the Middle East and Europe suffered

a 1.3 per cent drop in per capita incomes, the first decline for this region since 1987.

This area included Egypt, Jordan and Turkey, the so-called front-line states that suffered the most from the Gulf crisis, and also the newly emerging democracies in eastern Europe.

All the eastern European countries — Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia — had negative growth rates stemming primarily from the disruptions as they transform their economies to free-market systems.

The World Bank noted that it had stepped up its lending to former Soviet bloc countries in an effort to support their economic reform movements with Poland getting the largest amount, \$1.44 billion.

Only countries that are members of the World Bank qualify for loans. The Soviet Union has applied for membership but the United States has successfully led the effort to block it. The Bush administration contends that the country is not far enough along in its reform efforts to qualify for full membership in either the World Bank or its sister lending organization, the International Monetary Fund.

Instead, the United States and other rich nations have offered the Soviets a newly created "special associate" designation that would allow the Soviets to qualify for technical assistance but not direct loans.

At a briefing on the economic report, new World Bank President Lewis Preston told reporters that the more limited associate status was "the only thing on view at the moment."

He said that a World Bank mission currently in the Soviet Union to assess technical assistance needs would allow the agency "to respond positively to whatever roles they want us to play."

Richard Darman

Economists expect abnormally slow U.S. recovery

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. economy has been on a sluggish recovery since at least July and is unlikely to fall back into a recession, according to a National Association of Business Economists (NABE) survey released Monday.

The economists also expect inflation to remain moderate and the range of interest rates to change little over the next few years.

NABE's quarterly survey, taken in late August among a panel of 56 economic forecasters, was prepared for the group's annual convention in Los Angeles.

An overwhelming 79 per cent of the respondents said the recession that began in July 1990 ended in the April-June second quarter and another nine per cent believed it would end in the current third quarter.

They all agreed, however, that the recovery would be abnormally slow, primarily because of the U.S. central bank's tight money policy, the high debt load carried by consumers and reduced spending by federal, state and local governments.

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Mexico and Chile sign first Latin American free trade agreement

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Chile and Mexico Sunday signed the first free trade accord between two Latin American nations. The agreement is expected to lead to a major increase in bilateral trade in the coming four years.

"Through this agreement the political will of reaching economic integration has a concrete expression," said Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

"This will indeed lead to a real integration," said Chilean President Patricio Aylwin.

The free trade accord calls for a gradual elimination of customs fees over a period of four years. It also eliminates non-custom trade barriers and establishes a series of mechanisms to encourage reciprocal investments.

Bilateral trade between Chile and Mexico totalled \$157 million in 1990, with Mexico's exports to Chile amounting to \$100 million and Chilean sales to Mexico totalling \$57 million.

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Cinema
CONCORD
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ICA'S LAW
Mahmoud Abdul Aziz
Athar Al Hakim
Show: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema
PHILADELPHIA
Tel: 634144
KING OF
NEW YORK
Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre
Tel: 675571
Oct 3, 1991
THE OPENING OF
Nabil Al Mashini Theatre
with
SOMERSAULT TIME PLAY
Starring: The family of 'Abu Awwad neighbourhood'
Shows start at 8:30 every evening

Cinema
RAINBOW
Tel: 625135
ROOF TOPS
Show: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Armenia declares independence

YEREVAN, Armenia (R) — Armenia declared independence Monday and reportedly offered to renounce its claim to Nagorno-Karabakh in return for an independent government in the disputed territory and other guarantees.

The offer, if accepted, could help bring an end to bloodshed between the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan over control of Nagorno-Karabakh, a region occupied mainly by ethnic Armenians but lying within Azerbaijan.

The Armenian parliament unanimously approved the results of the referendum Saturday in which residents voted 99.31 per cent for independence from the Soviet Union, the Soviet News Agency (TASS) said.

The compromise offer came during talks that started Sunday between representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh and mediated by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, said Manav Agayev, an aide to Azerbaijan's envoy in Moscow.

Hundreds have died and thousands have been left homeless in conflicts that have spread from Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani border towns populated mainly by Armenians. The dispute has been one of the bloodiest under freedoms initiated since Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985.

Agayev said in a telephone

interview that the Armenian side in the talks suggested that it would ask its lawmakers to repeal or suspend their 1988 resolution claiming control of Nagorno-Karabakh. In return, Azerbaijan should:

— Remove Azerbaijani-controlled "black beret" Interior Ministry troops from Nagorno-Karabakh;

— Allow residents of Nagorno-Karabakh to establish an independent government of their own choosing;

— Allow all Armenian refugees who fled their homes in Azerbaijan to return safely.

Mr. Agayev said Armenia would stick to its demand approved earlier that Azerbaijan "guarantee the safety of people in the entire republic regardless of nationality."

Mr. Agayev stressed that the offer was "only a suggestion from the Armenian" side and declined to give an opinion about it. There was no immediate reaction from Mr. Yeltsin officials.

Mr. Yeltsin said he had said the sides agreed "that a constitutional order and legitimate bodies of power should be restored in Nagorno-Karabakh."

Armenia already has said it wants the restoration of local government councils suppressed by Azerbaijan and regulation of the presence of Soviet army and Interior Ministry troops.

The talks on ending the bloody fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-

Karabakh formally opened Monday in the southern Russian town of Zheleznovodsk, a day after Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Nazarbayev met informally with the sides and persuaded them to start negotiations aimed at finding a solution.

Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Nazarbayev have assumed the role of peacemakers in the ethnic feud where repeated Kremlin efforts had failed. Mr. Yeltsin has said Zheleznovodsk, in the northern Caucasus region, was chosen as a neutral venue for the talks.

Taking part in the meeting were President Azat Mutalibov of Azerbaijan, Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian and leaders of the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Mr. Ter-Petrosian said Mr. Yeltsin had offered on Aug. 17, the day before the coup, to mediate the conflict.

Mr. Yeltsin undertook the weekend peace mission emboldened by his soaring popularity for rebuffing the coup plotters who tried to topple Mr. Gorbachev last month. He visited the Azerbaijani capital of Baku and Nagorno-Karabakh's administrative centre, Stepanakert, before travelling to Yerevan.

Mr. Yeltsin said his talks in Stepanakert were "stormy. It was not easy."

The peace mission with Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov coincided with Armenia's referendum on independ-



ence. Mr. Ter-Petrosian officially announced the results Monday in parliament, which then approved them and erupted in a "stormy ovation," TASS reported.

Armenia's independence referendum needed two-thirds of the eligible voters to pass according to the Soviet constitution, and more than 50 per cent to pass under the Armenian constitution.

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan dates back centuries, but flared in 1988 when the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh expressed a desire to unite with the Armenian Republic.

Rebel Georgian guards reinforce positions

TBILISI, Soviet Union (R) — Truckloads of rebel National Guards, backed by artillery and armoured personnel cars, reinforced the opposition stronghold at the republic's television centre Monday.

The show of strength marked a rapid escalation in the Georgian crisis that has divided the capital, with supporters of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia dug in at the government complex and the opposition at the television centre.

Fundamentalism rising in Soviet Muslim republics

TASHKENT, USSR (AP) — When Abdullah Uta's father was sent to the front in World War II, he made a silent vow: If we survived, he would devote his first-born son to Allah.

Millions of Soviet citizens perished in the Nazi onslaught. But he lived, and kept the promise. He gave his young son to the Islamic clerics.

After years of secret study, Mr. Uta is now in the vanguard of a Muslim revival that may sweep away the Soviet Union's last bastions of communism with Islamic fundamentalism.

The prospect of Iranian-style regimes in the five predominantly Soviet Muslim republics, totalling nearly 40 million people, frightens both the Kremlin and the West.

Mr. Uta and other religious leaders say there is no reason to worry because their brand of Islam is compatible with democracy.

"We aren't going to cut off people's hands for stealing. That's Iranian barbarity," Mr. Uta said, sitting under an arbor of luscious, dark purple grapes that sheltered him from Uzbekistan's scorching sun.

"This is not Iran — and it's not going to be like Iran," he said.

Islam is on the rebound throughout the region, evidenced by construction of mosques, printing of Korans and the emergence of leaders like Mr. Uta, 43. As head of the underground, but flourishing, Islamic Renaissance Party of Uzbekistan, he is both a political and religious powerhouse.

Uzbekistan's hardline government has repeatedly declared the Islamic party illegal since its founding in February, but that has not dampened its appeal. Mr. Uta claims to have 500,000 active supporters.

Thousands of Uzbeks have demonstrated in several regions in recent days, defying a ban on rallies and demanding that power be handed over to Islamic leaders, the Soviet News Agency (TASS) reported Sunday.

The Muslim republics long have been neglected by the Kremlin. They are the poorest part of the Soviet Union, with the lowest education levels, highest birth rates and least politically active citizens.

They were the last to push for independence, and they are the final redoubt of the Communist Party, which collapsed almost everywhere else after last month's coup against Soviet

President Mikhail Gorbachev. Their drafters provide a third of the Soviet army's manpower.

But their loyalty to the Kremlin no longer can be taken for granted. The tide of Islam, coupled with nationalism, may tear them away — and with them, the last vestiges of the Soviet empire.

"We refuse to be colonies milked for natural resources and cannon fodder," said Abulfaz Aliyev, head of the pro-Islamic, pro-independence People's Front of Azerbaijan.

Economically, the Muslim republics are in no position to go it alone. Some hope for help from wealthy brethren in Iran and Saudi Arabia, but all acknowledge a need to retain trading links with the Soviet Union.

Four of the republics — Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Kirgizia and Turkmenia — are in Central Asia, bordering Afghanistan and China.

Azerbaijan, the fifth Muslim republic, is tucked between the Caucasus Mountains and the Caspian Sea and next to Iran. The discovery of offshore oil has enriched the republic but fouled the waters that produce its other black gold: Caviar.

The region's politics are far less developed than elsewhere.

Political rallies are banned in Uzbekistan, which is still controlled by one man, Communist Party boss Islam Karimov. Uzbekistan is the most populous Muslim republic, with 20 million people.

Azerbaijan, with 7 million people, held presidential elections on Sept. 8. But there was only one candidate, President Ayaz Mutalibov, a former Communist Party chief.

Soviet reformers seek unified movement

MOSCOW (AP) — Soviet reformers Monday opened a two-day conference to form a unified democratic movement and solidify gains made since the failed August coup.

"We are in economic — and to some degree political — chaos," said former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, a founder of the movement for democratic reforms and one of the conference's 1,000 participants.

Soviet Tajikistan introduces emergency rule, sacks president

MOSCOW (R) — Parliament in Tajikistan Monday voted to immediately impose emergency rule throughout the Soviet Central Asian republic and forced the acting president to resign, TASS news agency said.

Deputies took the vote after acting President Kadriddin Aslonov Sunday banned the republic's Communist Party and ordered the nationalisation of its property.

The vote in Tajikistan, one of the most conservative republics, seems to be the first move by a local Communist Party to strike back after the Soviet party was banned following last month's failed hardline coup.

Deputies revoked Mr. Aslonov's decree banning the party, which TASS said had provoked protesters to attack statues of Soviet state founder Vladimir Lenin in the capital Dushanbe.

One of the largest statues in the city was taken down Sunday on the orders of Dushanbe Mayor Maksud Ikromov.

"In connection with these facts the deputies demanded the resignation of Kadriddin Aslonov, the start of criminal proceedings against Maksud Ikromov, and annulled the (party) ban which they said was anti-constitutional," TASS said.

"By the middle of the day it

became known that Kadriddin Aslonov had offered his resignation, which was accepted by the majority of deputies," the agency said.

TASS said a crowd of 10,000 people had gathered outside the parliament building to protest against the decision to unban the party and sack Mr. Aslonov.

The state of emergency will be in force until next Jan. 1. Deputies also voted to put all statues of Lenin in Tajikistan under guard.

Most of the 15 Soviet republics banned their local parties for alleged complicity in the failed coup, but this is the first time such a ban has been overturned.

Aquino abandons referendum plan, seeks compromise

MANILA (AP) — President Corason Aquino will no longer promote a referendum to save a U.S. naval base and instead is trying to arrange a formula for a smooth withdrawal of U.S. forces, officials said Monday.

Mrs. Aquino promised to organize a "people power referendum" to overturn a Sept. 16 decision by the Senate to reject a 10-year lease for Subic Bay Naval Base.

Numerous politicians and constitutional experts said the referendum could not override the Senate decision. Meanwhile, U.S. military sources say operations at Subic are continuing with no sign the Americans are preparing to begin removing their forces.

Following a meeting with Mrs. Aquino, several senators and cabinet officials said the president was no longer sponsoring the

referendum, although she would not prevent others in the private sector from doing so.

A group of wealthy businessmen decided last Saturday to push through with the referendum, but Western diplomats and most political observers doubt the plan would succeed without presidential backing.

"There is no referendum by the government" Health Secretary Alfredo Benzon told reporters.

"That's not intended to be," Sen. Rene Saguisa, one of the 12 senators who voted against the base agreement, said Mrs. Aquino urged those attending the meeting to find a formula for removing the Americans without serious economic disruption.

"(The referendum) never came up because maybe it's not a unifying formula and it won't help heal the wounds of last week," he said.

Canadian government makes last unity pitch before Quebec vote

OTTAWA (R) — The Canadian government, in what may be its last bid to avert the nation's breakup, Tuesday unveils a blueprint for constitutional reform designed to keep restless Quebec from separating from the country in a referendum next year.

The ruling Conservatives hope a proposal to protect the French-speaking province's language and culture will make Quebec feel a vote on independence planned for October 1992 is unnecessary.

"This is the last chance before the referendum," said Leon Dion, a Laval University political scientist and constitutional consultant to several Canadian leaders.

"If the rest of Canada presents

proposals unacceptable to Quebec they will have a good chance at bringing about sovereignty," Mr. Dion said in an interview. "They would be the beginning of the breakup of the country."

Separatist fervour in Quebec swelled last year after the collapse of the so-called Meech Lake Accord, another attempt at constitutional reform.

The deal had been drawn up to try to persuade Quebec to sign the Canadian constitution.

The agreement, which would have satisfied Quebec's demand for powers to preserve its "distinct society" within Canada, failed in June 1990 after two provinces refused to ratify it.

The Canadian government says the new plan to be unveiled Tuesday would make all provinces equal.

It would also make the

appointed senate an elected upper body to give regions more decision-making power and recognise the right of native Indians to self-government.

Billed as a plan for the "renewal of the Canadian federation," the blueprint will be subjected to

six months of study and public hearings before a three-party parliamentary committee.

The committee is to report by Feb. 28 after which revised federal proposals will be released to reflect what Ottawa hopes will be a national consensus.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney has called for Canadians to be generous towards Quebec and for opposition parties to put aside partisan politics on the issue.

"If Canadians respond with reasonableness, open-mindedness, generosity and mutual respect, I can guarantee you the constitutional proposals we will table Tuesday will signal the beginning of a new day for a united Canada," Mulroney said last week.

Support for independence among Quebecers has fallen from 64 per cent last November to about half now, according to recent opinion polls.

Former French president hits row nerve with remarks on immigrants

PARIS (R) — Six months ago only one French politician was openly warning of an "invasion" of North African immigrants and advocating nationality laws based on blood ties. The far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen.

But now Le Pen appears to have found a surprising ally in the patrician figure of former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who with one magazine article has delighted the far right and outraged just about everybody else.

Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, usually thought of as a centre-right moderate, wrote in the Figaro magazine at the weekend that the time had come for severe measures including a halt on all new immigration.

"The kind of problem we are facing is changing from one of immigration ... towards one of invasion," he wrote.

He argued that immigrant children born in France should no longer be nationals who broke the law or were found without regular papers should be shipped

back home with their families. The article, touching one of the rawest nerves in French politics, caused a sensation.

It appeared in a week when hundreds of thousands of seasonal foreign workers were flooding into rural France to pick grapes at the beginning of the annual wine harvest.

And it signalled the start of what could be a long and acrimonious battle for the sizeable French anti-immigration vote in regional polls next March and parliamentary elections the following year.

"Six months before the regional elections, the immigrant is once again becoming a political football," said the left-wing daily Liberation.

Officially France has some 3.6 million immigrants, nearly half of them North African Arabs, in a population of 56 million. Unofficial estimates put the figure several hundred thousand higher.

Opinion polls have shown increasing public hostility to the growing Arab presence. A survey

published next to Mr. Giscard d'Estaing's article in the Figaro magazine said 52 per cent of French people supported Le Pen's call for a freeze on immigration.

With so much political capital at stake, mainstream figures have begun to flirt with the ideology of Le Pen's National Front, long the parish of French politics.

Mr. Giscard d'Estaing's one-time prime minister and opposition leader Jacques Chirac spoke in June of noisy, smelly, welfare-scravenging immigrants with too many wives and children.

Earlier this year a French comedy team made fun of their compatriots' anti-immigration instincts with a sketch depicting aliens planning to invade planet Earth.

Their spaceship bore a striking resemblance to a tagine, a comical Moroccan cooking pot, on top of a revolving steamer used for the North African dish Couscous. But after Mr. Giscard d'Estaing's article nobody is laughing.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Dalai Lama to visit Mongolia

ULAN BATOR (R) — Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama will visit Buddhists in Mongolia this week, the Mongolian Foreign Ministry said Monday. The Dalai Lama is the spiritual father of Mongolia's Lamaist Buddhists. "The Dalai Lama will visit from Sept. 27 to 29," the ministry said. It added that he would be the guest of Mongolia's southern neighbour and aid benefactor, Peking. Mongolia's southern neighbour and aid benefactor, Peking, opposes such a visit, believing it would lend support to the exile god-king's cause of independence for Chinese-ruled Tibet. The Dalai Lama will be the guest of Gandan Monastery, a Foreign Ministry official said.

Thousands support Bulgarian monarchy

SOFIA (AP) — Some 5,000 people gathered in downtown Sofia Sunday, some shouting "we want our czar" after they listened to a taped message by the former Bulgarian monarch, Simeon II. The rally was organised by the royalist confederation "Kingdom Bulgaria," a union of monarchist parties which will participate in parliamentary elections on Oct. 13. Monarchists are not currently represented in parliament. "The constitutional monarchy... would ease the transition and would guarantee national reconciliation," Simeon said. He was referring to the tense relationship between Bulgarians and the 1 million-strong Turkish ethnic minority. "I see that my participation in the social life of the country is more and more awaited," the king was heard saying. This was followed by rhythmic chants of "we want our czar" and "Simeon." King Simeon contended that "I neither pretend power, nor do I put my own interests above those of the motherland."

5 killed in U.S. prison uprising

DEER LODGE, Montana (R) — Prison inmates killed five convicts and took seven guards hostage at a U.S. jail Sunday before an assault team recaptured the building, officials said. The four-and-a-half-hour rampage by inmates ended when a 23-member assault team stormed the building and freed the guards unharmed, they said. No shots were fired. The bodies and eight beaten prisoners were discovered in a maximum security unit reserved for convicts who had informed on other inmates or otherwise cooperated with authorities. The rebellious inmates offered no resistance, officials said. They did not disclose how the prisoners were killed. The building was extensively damaged.

Judges trying Ershad threatened

DHAKA (AP) — Three top officials in the corruption and smuggling cases against President Hussain Muhammad Ershad have received death threats, news reports said Monday. Gen. Ershad, who seized power in a bloodless 1982 coup, resigned in December after nationwide protests. He is charged with illegally amassing wealth and blocking an investigation into gold smuggling. Judges Mohammad Ali Khan and Fazle Rabbi received postcards with the threats Saturday, the newspaper Sangbad reported. Attorney General Aminul Haq, the chief prosecutor, also was threatened. Mr. Haq said he was "not afraid of such threats." The judges were not available for comment. Judge Khan is hearing the case involving illegally amassing wealth. Early this year, the government seized Bangladesh currency worth \$571,428 from his home. The money was beyond Gen. Ershad's known income, the government said. Bangladesh's annual average income is \$170. In June, Mr. Khan convicted Gen. Ershad of

unlawful possession of firearms, and sentenced him to 10 years in prison.

All survive Soviet biplane crash

JAKARTA (R) — An ageing Soviet biplane making a commemorative flight from Berlin to Sydney crashed at the weekend on the Indonesian island of Lombok, seriously injuring two Germans and two Hungarians aboard, a hospital spokeswoman said Monday. "They are suffering from burns. Looking at their situation they may not leave the hospital for quite some time," she said from the main hospital in the neighbouring island of Bali, adding their injuries were not critical. The other three on board — all Hungarians — escaped with light injuries. The single-engine Antonov-2 biplane left Germany in June to mark the 100th anniversary of glider flights made by German aviation pioneer Otto Lilienthal.

Vietnam to apply for UNESCO help

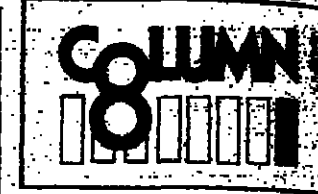
HANOI (R) — Vietnam is to apply to the United Nations for help in protecting historical monuments and places of scenic beauty, including two ancient capitals and an area of primeval forest, the official Vietnam News Agency said Monday. Hanoi hopes the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will recognise at least five sites, including the ancient cities of Hue and Hoa Lu, as protected under its world heritage convention. UNESCO recognition would require that the sites be preserved and open the door for increased UNESCO technical aid, a spokesman for Vietnam's National UNESCO Committee said. Hue, a city of palaces and pagodas, was capital of the Champa Kingdom from the second to the 14th century. It was rebuilt by the last imperial dynasty, the Nguyen, which ruled from 1902 to 1945.

New Zealand government hits new low

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand's conservative government plunged to a new low in popularity stakes Monday, and Prime Minister Jim Bolger defended himself against reports he was planning to harass pensioners and spy on the population. Support among committed voters for Mr. Bolger's ruling National Party plunged to 22 per cent in Monday's poll, its lowest rating since it took office 11 months ago. Other polls including undecided voters gave National an even lower rating. A leaked official document showed the government was considering forcing old age pensioners to answer complex questions about their savings and finances before allowing them to draw their pensions. Mr. Bolger was also hit by accusations that an identity card scheme for all New Zealanders would be developed into a sinister eavesdropping device to monitor its 3.5-million population.

Managua army chief to visit Taiwan

TAIPEI (R) — Nicaragua's military chief General Humberto Ortega arrives in Taiwan Wednesday for an eight-day visit, the government-funded Central News Agency said Monday. Gen. Ortega, brother of former President Daniel Ortega, will meet Taiwanese government leaders, the agency said. Local media said Gen. Ortega would sign a military cooperation agreement with Taiwan but a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied this. Taiwan's Vice President Li Yuan-Zu visited Nicaragua in August, during which his diplomatically isolated island pledged a \$30 million loan towards repaying the Central American nation's debt and gave \$100,000 to flood victims.



Princess Anne arrives in Chile

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Britain's Princess Anne arrived in Chile Sunday for a five-day visit, a tour that will include a trip to the remote northern Andes and the world's largest underground copper mine. Princess Anne met at the airport by Chilean Minister of Women's Affairs, and by Isabel Ayllwin, daughter of President Patricio Ayllwin. Sunday afternoon the royal visitor attended an equestrian competition and planted a tree at Santiago's Prince of Wales Country Club. Princess Anne will also visit parts of the Andes and Chiquibambas, the world's largest underground copper mine, 1,600 kilometres north of the capital.

Christie's doubtful of Lenin's value

LONDON (R) — London auction house Christie's said it has been offered two 10-metre (33-foot) statues of Lenin by the Soviet Communist Party, but experts fear they are too common to be of real worth to international art buyers. "It's not clear whether this approach is the first of many," Christie's managing director Dermot Chichester told Monday's Daily Telegraph newspaper. He said he could not say which Soviet city now had the statues or where they came from, to save embarrassment. Talks between Christie's and the vendor apparently focus on how much states of the founder of Soviet communism are really worth at a time when they are being taken down all over the country.

'Pee-Wee' may appear in next Batman movie

RADNOR (AP) — Paul Reubens, better known as alter ego Pee-Wee Herman, may appear in the next Batman movie. "I can't confirm anything officially," a Warner Bros. Studio spokesman said in the Sept. 28 issue of TV Guide magazine. "But if he does join the cast, it will be an unbelieveable scene where between one scene and a little more than that." Reubens wouldn't appear as the nerdy, bow-tied Pee-Wee Herman, said the spokesman, whom TV Guide didn't identify. "Batman returns," now filming in London, stars Michael Keaton as Batman, Mitchell Pfeiffer as Catwoman and Danny DeVito as the Penguin.

Shanghai cracks down on stamp speculators

PEKING (R) — Police in Shanghai, China's largest city, have arrested 48 people who turned a speculating on foreign exchange, stocks and bonds to postage stamps, a local newspaper said. The gang had set up an illegal market in collectible postage stamps, running up a turnover of several hundred thousand yuan (tens of thousands of dollars), Saturday's Jiefang Daily, received in Peking Sunday said. On Friday nearly 100 officers raided the market, arresting 48 people, including one man whose locked box contained 60,600 yuan (\$11,400) worth of stamps and 40,000 yuan (\$7,500) in cash.

Schoolgirls stripped in search for \$5

NEW DELHI (R) — About 80 Indian schoolgirls were stripped by their teachers during a search for 150 rupees (\$3) which a fellow student said had gone missing, newspapers said. They said the principal of the government-funded school in New Delhi said two other staff members were suspended after the incident. The girls were aged between 15 and 16, the newspapers said.

Oktoberfest opens in Munich

MUNICH (AP) — The 158th Oktoberfest opened in Munich with the traditional gun salute and higher prices. The 16-day festival, the biggest beer bash in the world, is expected to attract about 7 million visitors, with most foreign tourists coming from Austria, Switzerland, United States, Japan and Italy. They will find beer prices sharply higher than last year. A litre of brew costs up to 8.50 marks (\$5), compared to 7.55 marks (\$4.40) last year. Brewery owners said they were forced to raise prices because of new environmental-protection regulations imposed by city authorities. The new rules ban plastic plates and cutlery, force brewers to separate garbage and pay for its removal.